

# *What of The Mormons?*

*A Brief Study of the  
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*

*By*

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## *The Question*

### *W*HAT of the Mormons?

Here is a question which has been earnestly asked for more than a century. Over the years numerous answers have been given to it. The books alone which have been written around this query fill many feet of library shelf. It has been the theme of countless magazine articles, newspaper stories, pamphlets, and sermons. In the early days of Mormonism these writings and discourses were motivated largely by a spirit of blind prejudice, for the question was most often asked in an atmosphere of ignorance and bigotry. Fortunately, that has changed.

An honest question deserves an honest answer. *What of the Mormons?* Who are they? What do they believe? What is their program? What is their organization? What is their history?

This writing is a brief answer to these questions. Of necessity only the highlights of the subject have been dealt with. For the student or investigator who wishes to study further there are numerous published works generally available.

# *The Mormons Today*

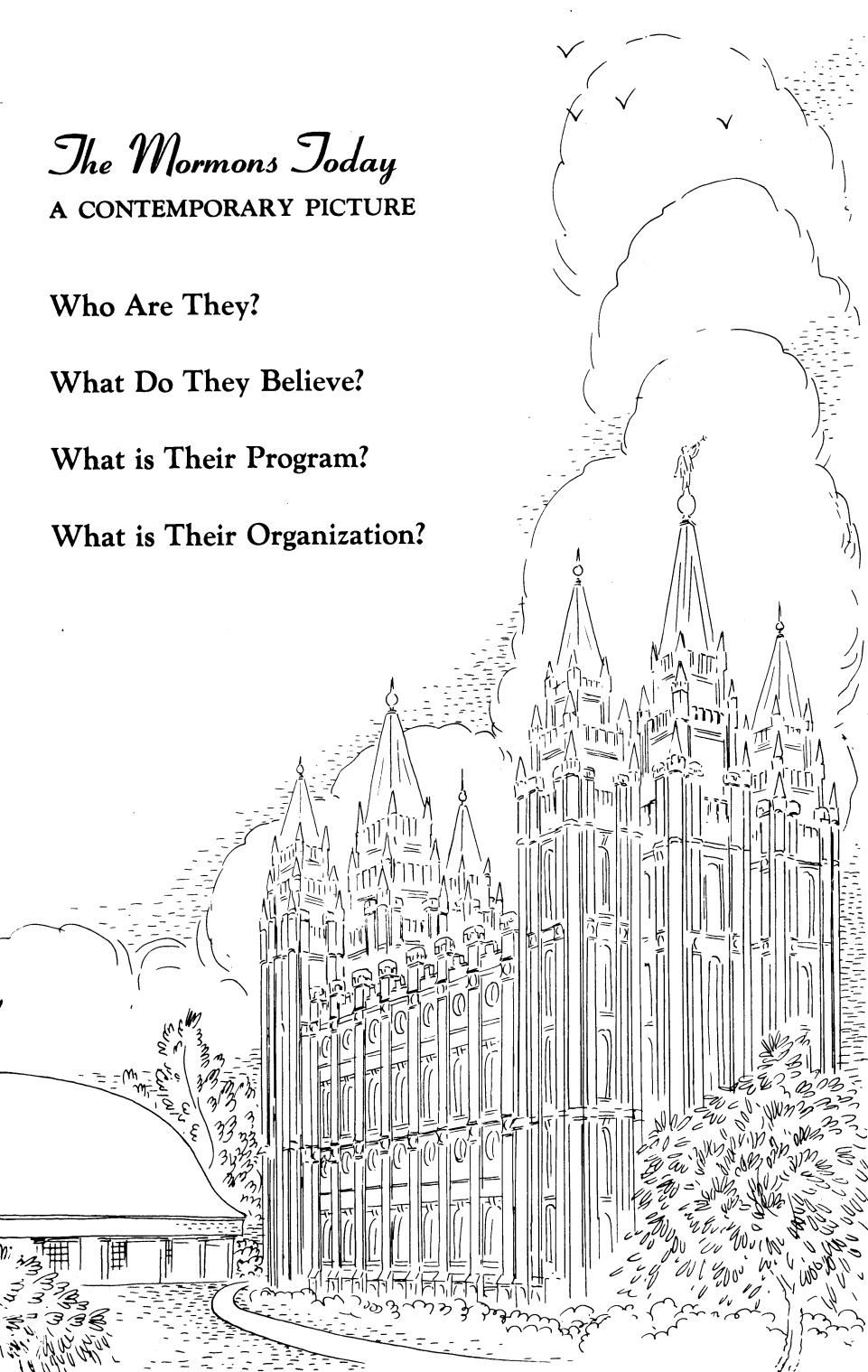
A CONTEMPORARY PICTURE

**Who Are They?**

**What Do They Believe?**

**What is Their Program?**

**What is Their Organization?**





## *Who Are They?*

*M*ORMON is a nickname for a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Just as converts to the Church of Christ in the first century came to be called Christians, so in the nineteenth century those who professed belief in the Book of Mormon were called Mormons. The title has remained, and there has been no disposition to change it, although it is gradually giving way to the name Latter-day Saint.

This also calls for a word of explanation. Saint is to be interpreted not with the meaning that has evolved from the traditions and practices of Roman Catholicism, but rather in the general sense in which Paul used it when writing to those who had accepted membership in the early church. For the Mormons regard themselves as saints only in the sense that they are believers in Jesus Christ and members of his Church.

## *PROTESTANTS OR CATHOLICS?*

They are generally classed as Protestants, since they are not Catholics. Actually they are no closer to Protestantism than they are to Catholicism. Neither historically, nor on the basis of modern association, theology, or practice can they be grouped with either. The movement did not arise out of dissension with any Christian denomination. Nor did it result from a schism within any religious society. Of

its origin we shall learn in detail later. Suffice it to say that its theology, its organization, and its practices are in many respects entirely unique among today's Christian denominations.

It is an interesting anomaly in Christianity. Its adherents may be classed as modern in the extent and efficiency of their organization. Yet they maintain there has been an apostasy from the church and principles of the New Testament to which we must return. In this they are fundamentalists.

Who are these people?

They are educators, farmers, doctors, bankers, merchants, and followers of most other vocations. They are found in responsible positions of government, finance, and industry. Their names are among the faculties of many of America's large universities. An unusual percentage are listed in *Who's Who in America*. More than a hundred thousand of them served in the armed forces during the last war.

In a general sense they are as other people, ordinary men and women. They wear no distinguishing dress, but they do profess some distinguishing beliefs and have achieved some unique accomplishments as a group.

*WHERE DO THEY LIVE?*

There are about a million of them scattered over the world. Branches of the Church are found in every state in the Union, in most of the provinces of Canada, and in every county of England. They are

found in Scotland and Ireland; in Germany, Belgium, France, Switzerland, Czechoslovakia, Holland, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and Finland; in Mexico, Brazil, and Argentina; in the Pacific Islands, New Zealand, Australia, and South Africa.

Mormonism is fundamentally the same in Stockholm as in Salt Lake City. Its philosophy, its teachings, its local organization are similar the world over. As might be expected, however, the facilities of the Church are better developed and the work accomplished has been more outstanding in those areas where are found the largest numbers of members and where the work has been in progress for relatively long periods.

The majority of Church members live in the United States. More of them reside in Utah than in any other state, although there are extensive segments of Latter-day Saint population in Idaho, Arizona, California, and other western states, and substantial congregations are found in most of the large cities of the nation.

Over seventy percent of Utah's population is nominally Mormon, and better than sixty percent of Salt Lake City's people are registered on the membership records of the Church. For this reason, and because the intermountain area was originally colonized by the Mormons, Salt Lake City is classed as a Mormon city and Utah as a Mormon state. However, generally they are so regarded only by those outside the state. Residents, either Mormon or non-Mormon, seldom give thought to the matter. There is no apparent class distinction, and no evidence of religious bigotry. One of Salt Lake City's most highly re-



### Roman Catholic Cathedral of the Madeleine

Salt Lake City is a community of churches, without religious contention. Mormons, Catholics, Jews, Baptists and adherents of the other major faiths worship, play, and work side by side.

spected mayors was a Jew, as was also one of the state's outstanding governors.

The major Christian denominations all have excellent churches and large congregations. For many years a Catholic broadcast has followed a Mormon program each Sunday evening over the city's largest radio station, and all other denominations have been afforded time on a population-ratio basis, entirely without cost. Incidentally, the station's stock is owned largely by the Mormon Church.

Of course all members of the Church cannot be classed as devout. As in other large organizations there are some who are members in name only. Yet an unusually large number actively participate. It is something of a modern religious phenomenon to find a hundred large Mormon congregations meeting every Sunday in a city of fewer than 200,000 people.

In some localities so many people attend church that it has become necessary to divide them into two or more fully organized groups, each with its own set of meetings, in order to accommodate them in the one available building. One Mormon meeting house accommodates three groups of members, with an average membership in each of about seven hundred. Each Sunday the building is busy from early in the morning until late in the evening on a carefully planned schedule. Every night in the week, and most afternoons, it is also occupied with church activities. The members necessarily submit to considerable inconvenience under such crowded schedules, but they continue to come, and in increasing numbers. An extensive building program is now under way to relieve this condition

made necessary by shortages of labor and materials during the war.

### *HOW IS THE CHURCH ORGANIZED?*

In the larger centers of population each member of the Church belongs to a ward; in areas of sparse population to a branch. Each is simply an ecclesiastical unit similar to a parish, embracing all of the members within a particular geographical area.

A ward ordinarily comprises from 450 to 1200 members. In such places as Salt Lake City the ward district may include only three or four square blocks, while in a rural section it may extend over many square miles. Ordinarily each ward has its own church building, including chapel, recreation hall, and class rooms. However, as indicated above, in many cases in recent years, two or more wards have shared one plant.

A number of wards form a larger ecclesiastical unit known as a stake. A stake roughly corresponds to a diocese. There are in the Church about twelve hundred wards grouped into about two hundred stakes. Stakes are found throughout Utah, Idaho, Arizona, and in extensive areas of California, Nevada, Wyoming, Colorado, Oregon, and Washington. Also the wards in and around New York, Washington, D. C., Chicago, Jacksonville, and Columbus, S. C., are organized into stakes.

In areas where members are scattered, missions are organized. The missions are divided into districts, and the districts into branches.



Utah State Capitol Building with Mormon  
Battalion Monument in Right Foreground.

Airview of a Section of Salt Lake City



What of the Mormon clergy? It is, to say the least, very unusual by present day standards. There is no paid ministry. Twenty-six general officers and the presidents of missions are given living allowances. Add to this a few specialists and a staff of clerks who give their full working time to the Church. These constitute all who can be classified as paid personnel. The great bulk of work and responsibility is carried by the rank and file who receive no financial remuneration; who, in fact, contribute generously not only of their time and talent, but of their means as well.

Each ward is presided over by a bishop. He may be a lawyer, professor, merchant, or a follower of any other honorable vocation. He must be a man of integrity, industry, and devotion to the Church. He must have a good name in the community in which he lives. He carries responsibilities similar to those of a minister or priest in other churches. He arranges and conducts worship services, blesses the sick, sees that the poor are taken care of, conducts funerals, performs civil marriage ceremonies and discharges a hundred other duties involved in looking after the welfare of a large group of people.

How can he do it, and yet earn a living for himself and family? To say the least, it is a heavy burden, generally gladly borne. But it would be impossible for one man to carry. Organization is the answer. Everyone in the Church who is active and old enough to do something, generally has a responsibility. In fact, he may have several. And usually the greatest enthusiasm for the cause is found among those who



do the most. The organization which makes this possible and necessary will be discussed in a subsequent section.

To return to the question, *Who are the Mormons?*

They are ordinary workaday people, and at the same time a very unordinary group. They are members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. They are particularly interesting because in many parts of the world and under varieties of political, economic, and social conditions they have adjusted twentieth century living to those standards laid down by the Master twenty centuries ago.

## *What Do They Believe?*

LATTER-DAY SAINTS incorporate in their religious code all of the ethical standards and basic doctrines of the New Testament. They teach the Golden Rule, the necessity for good works, faith, repentance, and baptism, virtue and honor, and the need for and efficacy of prayer. In this they may appear to be only one more sect among the multitude of Christian denominations.

Nevertheless, they have often been regarded as heretics. The formal creeds and confessions of the Roman and Protestant churches are not found in their theology. This is to be expected since Mormonism is not an offshoot from any present day church.

It begins with the teachings of the Bible. These it has implemented with what its adherents call modern revelation. The combination has given the movement its particular vigor and flavor.

### GOD AND MAN

Primary among Mormon teaching is belief and faith in God the Father, in Jesus Christ his son, and in the Holy Ghost. But the Mormon concept is not set forth in vague creeds. It is simple and straightforward.

God is in form like a man. He is personal. He speaks; and has spoken to man. He is exalted, and by human standards he is all-wise and all-powerful. But he is merciful and kind. He is the father of the spirits of all men, and he has a father's consideration

for and interest in his children. His work and his glory lie in their eternal welfare.

Jesus Christ is his son begotten in the flesh. He lived, and died, and was resurrected in a literal sense as the New Testament recounts. He was the savior and redeemer of men according to a plan formulated before the world was created. He yet lives, a being of distinct form and personality. The Holy Ghost is a personage of spirit, yet nonetheless an individual personality.

These three constitute the Godhead. The doctrine is explicit. It came about as the result of a remarkable experience which will be detailed later. The effect of this doctrine has been powerful, for those who have so believed have prayed to God as one near and personal.

What of man?

Man is in reality a child of God. Nothing in the universe is more important than the individual. His spirit was begotten of God; consequently all men are brothers in a very real sense. In the Mormon concept the phrase "the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man" takes on a new and powerful meaning.

Man is God's greatest creation. For him the world was formed. His welfare is the Father's chief concern. But He does not make of man a pawn. He persuades and directs, but never forces. Man is free to choose his own way. There is none of the doctrine of predestination in Mormon theology. Free agency is a sacred gift, divinely bestowed. Here is the answer to the old question, "If God loves his children, why does he permit war and strife and kindred evils?"

Because He holds inviolable the right given man to choose his way, between good and evil, between life and destruction.

Does God help those who seek him? Yes, but all blessings are predicated upon obedience to law. Man must therefore live up to divine principles to claim the blessings of God. Only those who seek him and seek to do his will have claim upon him.

### *HOW LONG IS LIFE?*

Man is an eternal being. As an individual of spiritual substance he lived before coming to earth. Wordsworth expressed this great truth when he wrote the immortal lines:

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting;  
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,  
Hath had elsewhere its setting  
And cometh from afar;  
Not in entire forgetfulness,  
And not in utter nakedness,  
But trailing clouds of glory do we come  
From God, who is our home.

Life upon the earth in a mortal body is but another step in a great eternal march. Here we have opportunity for experience, for improvement, for growth. And on the basis of what we believe here we shall continue to live and grow in the life beyond the grave.

In the life to come we shall not be arbitrarily divided into two fixed groups—inhabitants of heaven and hell. Jesus stated, "In my Father's house are

*many* mansions." There will be various grades and stations. There will be activity and learning. We shall know each other there as we know each other here. Our individuality will be retained. "Whatever principle of intelligence we attain unto in this life, it will rise with us in the resurrection." "The glory of God is intelligence." These are Mormon aphorisms. Life is purposeful. It is progressive. It leads to Godhood.

There is nothing of reincarnation, nothing of Nirvana, nothing of a static heaven, nor a hell of hot flame in Latter-day Saint philosophy. Heaven lies in the growth that comes of improvement and achievement. It is the place where will be those who have achieved this goal by obedience to the commandments of God. Hell lies in the remorse and anguish that come of opportunity wasted.

### PRIESTHOOD

Priesthood in Mormonism has something of the same meaning as is attached to it by other churches—authority to act in the name of God. But among the Latter-day Saints it is not restricted to a very few who have been trained in seminaries and universities.

Every man and boy over twelve years of age may hold the priesthood provided he conforms to the standards of the Church. Some 247,000 of the million members hold the priesthood in its various offices.

There are two orders of priesthood—the Aaronic and the Melchizedek. The Aaronic is concerned with the temporal affairs of the Church; the Melchizedek, which is a higher order embracing all of the

authority of the Aaronic, is principally concerned with spiritual affairs.

Within each of these orders are various grades—Deacon, Teacher, and Priest in the Aaronic; Elder, Seventy, High Priest in the Melchizedek. Boys are ordained deacons at twelve provided their lives comport with the principles of the gospel. As they grow older they are advanced through various offices, depending upon their living.

Each office carries with it particular responsibilities and powers. Among these are authority to baptize, to administer the sacrament, to preside over various groups, and in the highest instance to preside over the Church itself.

While this priesthood carries with it the authority to govern the Church and its members in their religious activities, the manner in which it may be exercised is definitely circumscribed. The law of the Church, believed to be divinely pronounced, reads: "No power or influence can or ought to be maintained by virtue of the priesthood only by persuasion, by long-suffering, by gentleness and meekness, and by love unfeigned; by kindness and pure knowledge, which shall greatly enlarge the soul without hypocrisy and without guile."

Here is set forth the spirit of government within the Church. There shall not be compulsion nor autocracy. Those who stand in positions of leadership shall act in a spirit of love, persuading but not forcing, without hypocrisy and without guile.

## REVELATION

Fundamental in Mormon theology is the principle of modern revelation. "We believe all that God has revealed, all that he does now reveal, and we believe that he will yet reveal many great and important things." This is the official statement of the doctrine. Christians and Jews generally maintain that God revealed himself and directed chosen men in ancient times. Mormonism maintains that the need for divine guidance is as great in our modern, complex world, as it was in the comparatively simple times of the Hebrews. It is true that fundamental truths set forth in the Old and New Testaments are as binding in our day as in the day they were pronounced. Yet our daily life poses problems unknown centuries ago. Moreover, some of the teachings of the Bible have been interpreted in so many different ways because the record is not clear, that many thoughtful people know not what to believe.

If God spoke anciently, is it unreasonable to believe that he can speak in our time? What man would think to deny God the right to express himself?

In essence, Mormonism claims to be a modern revelation of old principles divinely pronounced with new emphasis and completeness in our day.

## WHAT OF THE BIBLE?

The Bible is the word of God, written by men. It is basic in Mormon teaching. But the Latter-day Saints recognize that errors have crept into this sacred

work because of the manner in which the book has come to us. Moreover, they regard it as not being complete as a guide. Scores of different types of church organization and conflicting interpretations on basic doctrines, which have led to the creation of hundreds of different sects, bear witness to the inadequacy of the Bible.

Supplementing the Bible, the Latter-day Saints have three other books. These with the Bible constitute the standard works of the Church. They are known as the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price.

The teachings found in them do not conflict with the teachings of the Bible. In fact they confirm the divinity of the Hebrew scripture and greatly clarify many doctrines mentioned therein over which men have argued for centuries.

## MARRIAGE

To many people Mormonism has meant one thing only—polygamy. This has been the subject of lurid tales in all parts of the world. Once such stories were extremely popular. But as the facts have come to be known, such writings have largely disappeared.

The truth of the matter is this: Mormonism claims to be a restoration of God's work in all previous dispensations. The Old Testament teaches that the patriarchs—those men favored of God in ancient times—had more than one wife under divine sanction. In the course of the development of the Church in the nineteenth century, it was revealed to the



leader of the Church that such a practice of marriage again should be entered into.

The announcement of this doctrine was a great shock. Most of the converts to Mormonism were of Puritan New England stock. Shortly after Brigham Young heard of the doctrine he saw a funeral cortege passing down the street, and he is reported to have said that he would gladly trade places with the man in the coffin rather than face this doctrine.

Nevertheless, the leaders of the Church accepted it as a commandment from God. It was not an easy thing to do. Only those whose characters were of the highest, and who had proved themselves capable of maintaining more than one family, were permitted so to marry. Never at any time were more than *three percent* of the families of the Church polygamous. The practice was regarded strictly as a religious principle.

In the late eighties, Congress passed various measures prohibiting the practice, and when the Supreme Court declared the law constitutional, the Church indicated its willingness to comply. Consistently, it could do nothing else in view of its basic teaching on the necessity for obedience to the law of the land. That was in 1890. Since then officers of the Church have not performed plural marriages, and members who have entered into such relationships have been excommunicated. However, because of false information industriously circulated, many ridiculous notions of the practice have persisted. These have obscured the true picture of the Latter-day Saint doctrine of marriage.

Marriage in Mormon theology is a sacred contract, divinely ordained. Under the authority of the priesthood a man and woman are married not only for this life as legal husband and wife, but for all eternity as well. Such marriage, however, takes place only in sacred temples of which there are but eight in the Church, and is performed only by a few men delegated with authority to do so. Bishops and other officers perform ordinary civil marriages as do ministers and priests of other churches.

The Church lays great stress on the sanctity of the home and teaches that children are a blessing from the Lord. There is no principle on which the Latter-day Saints lay greater emphasis than the sacredness of the marriage covenant. Adultery is next to murder in gravity in Mormon theology. Strict morality is taught, and the Church has used its means and facilities liberally to teach its youth the necessity for moral cleanliness and the blessings of happy marriage.

### *THE WORD OF WISDOM*

Mormon theology deals with such widely diversified subjects as the nature of heaven and the evils of alcohol. Actually, in the philosophy of this system the two are rather closely related. Our bodies are sacred. Man is created in the image of God. His strength is to be used for the betterment of his own condition, as well as for the betterment of his associates and his surroundings. His body is the tabernacle of his spirit. In the resurrection he will again take up his body.

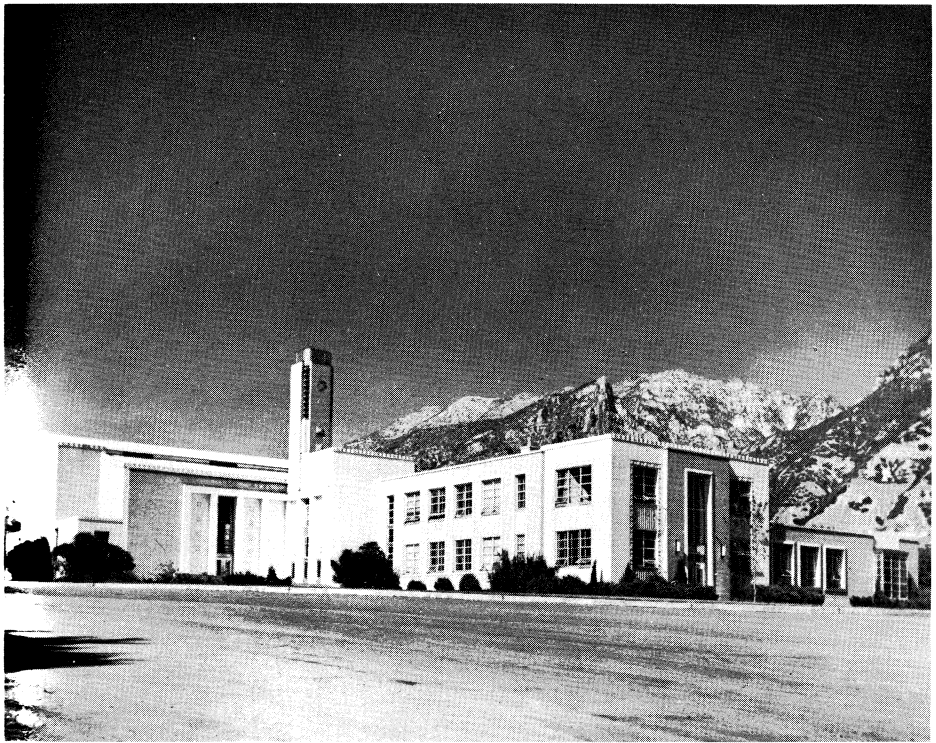
In brief, a sacred concept is attached to the human body. As such, it ill becomes any man or woman

to injure or dissipate his or her health. In the light of this philosophy members of the Church are encouraged to refrain from alcohol and tobacco and other deleterious substances which impair health and well being. The effect of such teaching over a hundred years is demonstrated in comparative health statistics. Based on group averages the Mormons live longer and enjoy better health than the people of the United States as a whole and the people of other nations whose statistics have been compiled by the League of Nations.

### *EDUCATION*

"A man cannot be saved in ignorance." Education is not only a desirable thing, according to Mormon theology, but it is necessary to eternal progress. That which we learn here we shall retain, and we shall continue to learn in the world to come. Truth is the thing to be sought for—truth in all fields. In the very early days of the Church the following injunction was given as a divine revelation:

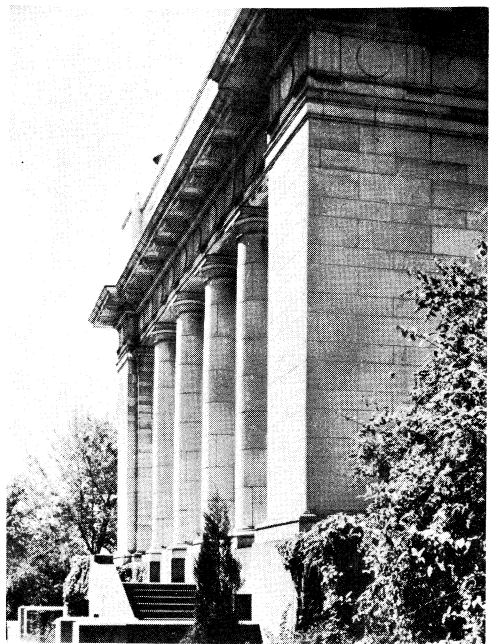
Teach ye diligently and my grace shall attend you, that you may be instructed more perfectly in theory, in principle, in doctrine, in the law of the gospel, in all things that pertain unto the kingdom of God, that are expedient for you to understand; of things both in heaven and in the earth; things which have been, things which are, things which must shortly come to pass; things which are at home, things which are abroad; the wars and the perplexities of the nations, and the judgments which are on the land; and a knowledge also of countries and of kingdoms.



Joseph Smith Memorial Building

Karl G. Maeser Memorial Building

Brigham Young  
University  
Provo, Utah



Education in all of its implications is therefore a concern of the Church. Accordingly, it has used its resources liberally in fostering schools. Moreover, it has constantly urged its youth to higher achievement and usefulness through education.

This philosophy doubtless accounts in some measure for the high place achieved by the people of Utah in the field of public education. Utah outranks all other states. A recent study\* indicates that while the state is in thirty-second place in the nation in its financial ability to support education, it leads in educational accomplishment, in educational efficiency, and in the extent of adult education. The compilers of this study conclude their findings with this statement: "This appears to be due almost wholly to the high value placed on education by the people of Utah. . . . Utah easily outclasses all other states in over-all performances in education."

Studies of the Selective Service System have produced similar findings. A published survey concludes a discussion of the educational background of men entering the military service from different parts of the country with the statement : "At the other extreme was the mountain state of Utah with only 9.4 percent inductees and enlistees having completed less than 1 year of high school, 18.5 percent having completed at least 1 year of college and the median years

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\**Education America's Magic*, Hughes and Lancelot, Iowa State College Press, 1946.

of schools completed being 2 years of high school, or 1 above the national average.”†

From the early years of its Utah development the Church has declared itself against the teaching of sectarian religion in public schools. But at the same time it has recognized the need for religious instruction along with regular day school education.

To meet this need it has established seminaries and religious institutes convenient to public high schools and universities. Here students are offered courses in the Old and New Testaments as well as in Church history and doctrine. There are now 102 seminaries maintained in connection with high schools in Utah and neighboring states, and fourteen religious institutes located near the campuses of western universities.

In addition to these facilities the Church maintains Brigham Young University at Provo, Utah, a fully accredited institution with an enrollment of six thousand. It also maintains a junior college in the state of Idaho, and in northern Mexico it has a system of five grade schools and one high school.

### WHAT ABOUT MONEY?

It may appear strange to discuss the Church's financial operations in a section dealing with its theology. But money is essential in the operation of a religious society as in any other organization, and the

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†*The Serviceman and the Veteran*, Re-employment Statistics Bulletin No. 2, National Headquarters, Selective Service System, July 1, 1946, pp. 46-7.

manner in which it is to be secured is set forth in the scripture as a religious principle.

There is no collection in Mormon meetings. The ancient law of the tithe is the financial law of the Church. Latter-day Saints believe and accept it as of divine pronouncement. Each member is expected to contribute one-tenth of his income for the support of the cause. This is taught as a principle of religion, as much so as any other.

However, there is no compulsion in this matter. A man is not excommunicated if he fails to pay his tithing. No record is published; the matter is kept in strict confidence between himself and his bishop, and no officer of the Church would consider divulging such information.

The tithing thus collected goes into the general funds of the Church, and is then distributed according to various needs. Among these are the erection and maintenance of educational facilities, temples and other church buildings, and kindred requirements.

The funds used for charity purposes come from a different source. The first Sunday of each month is known among the Mormons as Fast Day. All members are expected to refrain from two meals on this day, and contribute the cost of these meals for the relief of the poor. Every penny thus collected is so used, first among those of the locality in which it is collected. Then if there is a surplus it is turned into a general fund on which those wards which do not have sufficient funds may draw.

In addition to these means, some funds are collected for other purposes. To the outside observer

the price of membership in the Church may appear high. But those who are active do not so consider it. Not only do they grow spiritually as a result of unselfish giving, but they can accept with good conscience all of the facilities which the Church has to offer in its extensive program.





## *What Is Their Program?*

*I*N all its ramifications the Mormon Church appears to be a complex society. But to its members, as the Church affects their individual lives, it is both simple and effective.

Perhaps the best way to indicate the nature of its program is to note its effect upon what might be termed a sample Mormon family. Because this program is most highly developed in urban areas of fairly dense Latter-day Saint population, we shall take a family living in a Salt Lake City stake, although the same situation would hold equally true in any stake in a metropolitan area, and in most of the rural stakes. The names of the family and the ward and stake in which they live are fictional, but actual situations are described.

Let it be the Jones family. It consists of the father, the mother, and four children. Ralph is twenty-two, Betty is nineteen, Bob is fourteen, and Susan is eight. By profession Mr. Jones is a certified public accountant. He belongs to one of the city's civic clubs, and might be either a Democrat or a Republican. The family live in an attractive but modest home.

### *HOW DOES THE CHURCH AFFECT THEIR LIVES?*

The Jones family belong to the Hill Heights Ward, which is one of eight wards in the Blue Ridge Stake. There are about eight hundred people in their

ward. They call it *their* ward as familiarly as they speak of *their* home. They contributed toward the construction of the building, and each month they contribute toward its maintenance. They feel pride of ownership in it. And they feel at home, because they go there often, not on Sundays only, but during the week as well.

Mr. Jones is a counselor in the bishopric of the ward. The bishopric consists of a bishop and two counselors. In modern business language Mr. Jones might be called a vice-president. He has been in this office for two years, and will remain for an indefinite period until he and his associates are released with a vote of thanks for their services. Then three other men will take their places.

### THE SUNDAY PROGRAM

On Sunday morning everyone in the Jones home gets ready for church. Mr. Jones and Bob, the fourteen-year-old boy, leave before the mother and girls. The eldest boy, Ralph, is away from home. We will discuss him later.

At nine o'clock the father and Bob go to Priesthood meeting. Bob is a deacon, the father is a high priest. Each belongs to a quorum, that is, a local group of members holding the same office in the Priesthood. At the opening of the meeting all of the men and boys meet together for song and prayer and any discussion of general interest. Following this they separate into quorum meetings.

On the particular Sunday of which we are now speaking, the bishop announces a matter of practical

interest to all of the men and boys. He indicates that the concrete walks around the building are badly cracked, and that the shrubs and lawn also need special attention. Mormonism has always been concerned with the temporal affairs of life as well as with the spiritual, so that the mention of such an item in a Priesthood meeting does not appear out of place to those present.

The bishop indicates that the problem has been discussed by a committee, and that he and his associates recommend that these matters be given immediate attention. He advises that Brother Taylor [Mormons usually address each other as Brother] will make his truck and cement mixer available on Thursday evening if all who can do so will assist. In this way, the bishop points out, the work can be handled in one night.

The boys should come with rakes and spades to take care of the lawn and shrubs. The men will remove the old concrete, set the forms, and pour and trowel the new walks. The women of the Relief Society will provide sandwiches and punch.

The bishop asks for any comment after he has outlined the proposition. Two or three men express themselves to the effect that the work should be done and they feel that the Priesthood quorums should support the bishopric to see that it is done quickly. Then in keeping with Mormon procedure the proposition is put to a vote, and it is unanimously agreed that on the following Thursday the men and boys of the ward will gather at the meeting house prepared to work.

After this item of practical business, the meeting separates into quorums, where each group con-

siders the welfare of its members, and studies a course of instruction prepared by a general committee of the Church. In these quorum meetings is found an expression of fraternity in its finest application. Under quorum sponsorship religious instruction is given, the social needs of members are met, and service projects are undertaken for the welfare of any unfortunate members or the widows and families of any deceased members of the quorum. This is a Sunday meeting, but its consequences are felt in a variety of circumstances throughout the week.

Sunday School follows the Priesthood meeting. This gathering embraces all members of the Church from the very young to the aged. The entire Jones family attend. In their Sunday School twelve different classes are offered for various age groups, with a complete curriculum of religious study.

On Sunday afternoon Mr. Jones and the bishop go to the hospital to visit a member of the ward who is seriously ill. Incidentally, this is one of several hospitals maintained by the Church and open to patients of all denominations. By the authority of the Priesthood which they hold, these men lay their hands upon the head of the invalid and pronounce a blessing.

In the evening a worship service is held. Again all of the family attend. Betty and her mother both sing in the choir, and sometimes the father conducts the meeting. As a deacon, Bob, with other boys, passes the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper to those in attendance.

Each Sunday there is a different speaker for this worship service. Sometimes members of the ward are called to address the congregation. On other occasions

visiting speakers are invited in. Usually there is a five-minute talk by one of the young people of the ward, and both Betty and Bob have had this opportunity.

### *CHURCH ON WEEK DAYS*

On Monday evening the Jones family remain at home. In fact, Monday is known in the ward as Home Night. The authorities of the Church have recommended that all families spend at least one evening a week together to encourage and preserve family unity and fellowship. There are no conflicting ward meetings scheduled for this night.

Betty plays the piano and the family sing together. Each member of the family contributes something to the program. Following this they discuss plans for a trip during the coming summer. The mother has special refreshments prepared for this evening, after which they read together a chapter of scripture, sing a song, and kneel together in prayer before retiring.

On Tuesday afternoon Mrs. Jones goes to her Relief Society meeting. The Relief Society is the women's auxiliary organization of the Church. It is, in fact, America's oldest woman's organization of national scope, having been established in 1842.

The program of the meetings is varied. The first week of the month is devoted to the study of theology. The next week sewing and homemaking skills are taught. The third Tuesday is spent in a study of literature, and the fourth week is devoted to social science.

Following school on Tuesday afternoon Susan, the eight year old daughter, attends the Primary Association, a Church auxiliary for children. Here the younger members of the ward receive religious instruction, play games, and pursue various arts and crafts.

On Tuesday evening Betty and Bob attend MIA—Mutual Improvement Association. Bob is a Boy Scout, and he is proud of his church's achievement in this field. The Mormon Church has a larger percentage of its boys enrolled in Scouting than has any other religious organization in the United States.\* A Scout room is provided in the meeting house, and every boy is encouraged to become a Scout when he reaches twelve.

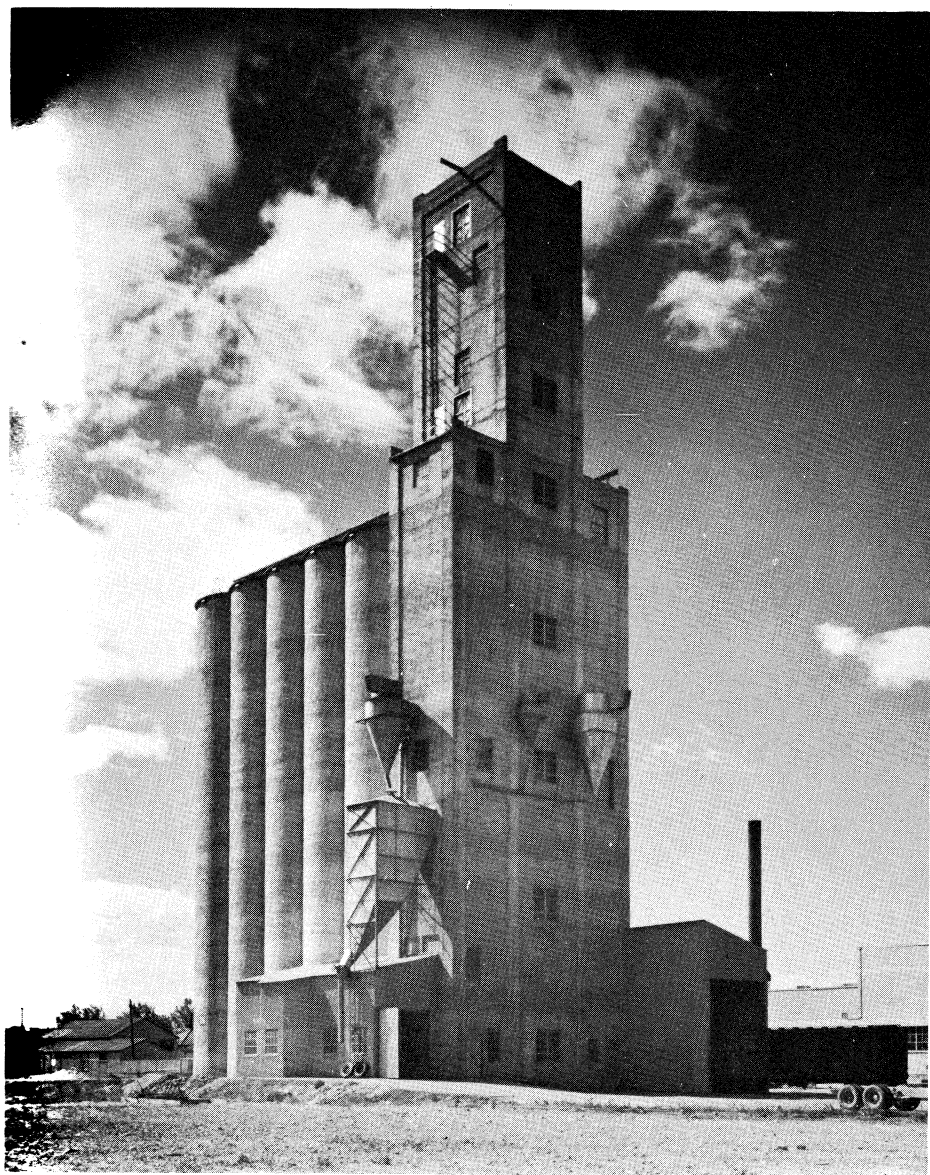
Betty meets with a group of her own age. They follow various courses of study, including drama, public speaking, dancing, and music.

On Wednesday evening Betty and her mother go to the ward meeting house for an hour and a half of choir practice, while Mr. Jones attends a meeting of the bishopric to discuss the many problems incident to the operation of the ward.

Thursday evening Mr. Jones and Bob go to work on the ward grounds. Mrs. Jones comes later to serve the refreshments. These men and boys constitute an interesting group, all dressed in old clothes and having a good time together. There is Nelson, the banker; Thomas, the dentist; Peterson, the smelter foreman; Barkley, the auto mechanic; Taylor, the

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\*Thirty-fourth Annual Report, Boy Scouts of America, p. 47.



### Grain Elevator, Welfare Square, Salt Lake City

Built by volunteer labor, and having a capacity of 318,000 bushels, this is one of the many facilities maintained under the Church Welfare Program for the production, preservation, and distribution of food, clothing, and other items.



contractor; Myers, who teaches philosophy; and many others, of various trades and professions. Supervising them is Brother Barnum, a little fellow with a big smile, whose regular trade is cement finishing. By nine-thirty that night the cement is poured, the grounds are cleaned up, the refreshments are gone, and everyone has had a pleasant time.

Friday is a big night for Betty. The Blue Ridge Stake is holding its Spring Prom. All wards of the stake unite six times yearly for such dances in a beautiful ball room with an excellent orchestra. Looking at five hundred couples, the girls in formal dress, one would never guess this to be a church function. The only clue that might indicate its identity is an opening prayer, and the absence of drinking and smoking. There is an air of dignity and refinement. But there is nothing somber, nothing pious about these dancers. They are having a good time.

On Saturday afternoon Bob and his father go out to cultivate peas on the ward welfare project. With fifty others, they make short work of the cultivating. But there will be considerable work in the weeks to come, because this ward has an assignment to furnish, among other things, eight tons of shelled peas for the Church Welfare Program.

Other wards will have other assignments, all contributing toward the production of vast quantities of food, clothing, fuel and other commodities to meet the needs of those in the Church requiring assistance. Production quotas are worked out by various regional and general committees. All labor is on a voluntary basis, and the results are startling to the stranger.

Eighty-five percent of the needs of those requiring assistance are now produced under this program. The combined efforts of the Jones family and their thousands of associates in many areas make this possible.

\* \* \*

Such might be a week in the life of this family, Sunday through Saturday. But the Church touches them in other ways also.

Betty attends the University, and after school or when she has a free hour she goes over to the "Institute." This is a religious center maintained by the Church near the campus. Here she enjoys social opportunity and takes a class in the New Testament taught by a man of outstanding scholarship.

She might have gone to Brigham Young University at Provo, Utah, an accredited four-year institution maintained by the Church. But she preferred the state university since she could live at home.

### *WHAT ABOUT RALPH?*

All of this discussion has omitted Ralph, the twenty-two year old member of the family. He is in England, serving on a mission for the Church. During the war he saw military service in France and Germany. Following his release the bishop talked to him about a mission. He had saved some money while in the army and was glad to go. When his own funds run out, his father will send him what he needs. If it should become necessary his Priesthood quorum will also help.

Without compensation from the Church he has gone to preach the gospel for two years. Three thousand other young men and women are doing the same. When Ralph's mission is completed he will return home. Then he plans to finish law school.

Such, in brief outline, is the relationship of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to the Jones family—and to the thousands of other families in many parts of the world who comprise its membership. Its program is designed to satisfy their spiritual needs, to afford them opportunity for mental and social growth, and to assist them economically should this become necessary. It aims to make them better citizens, better neighbors, better friends.

## *What Is Their Organization?*

*I*N basic organization the Church goes back to New Testament times. In efficiency of operation it has often been described as strictly modern. This is not a contradiction.

Mormons maintain that the fundamental organization of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the same as that which prevailed in the church established by the Savior.

Early in his ministry Jesus called twelve men whom he ordained apostles. To these he gave power to heal the sick, to raise the dead, to minister the ordinances of the gospel. "Freely ye have received, freely give," he enjoined them. Then they were sent forth to the cities of Israel to bear witness of him and his kingdom. Three among them — Peter, James, and John—stand out in the scriptures as the leaders, particularly after the death and resurrection of the Savior.

The Lord also appointed Seventy to assist in the work. These he sent out by pairs with authority to speak for him. Success crowned their ministry as becomes evident from the declaration that "they returned again with joy."

Following Jesus' death the work was carried beyond the confines of Israel to the cities of Syria, then to Asia Minor, and later to Greece and Rome. The word was spread with such effect that Paul, some thirty years later, declared that the gospel had been preached to every creature under heaven.



## The First Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

These men preside over the activities of the Church in all the world. *Left to right:* J. Reuben Clark, Jr., First Counselor in the First Presidency; President George Albert Smith; David O. McKay, Second Counselor.



## Church Administration Building, Salt Lake City

Center of the world-wide activities of the Church. Offices of the First Presidency, the Council of the Twelve Apostles, and the First Council of the Seventy, as well as other general offices, are all located here.

As various branches of the Church were organized, bishops and elders were ordained to preside over them, and other offices in the Priesthood were filled. Paul speaks specifically of apostles and prophets, bishops and elders, high priests, evangelists, priests, teachers, deacons and pastors. He also makes clear the necessity for these various offices in their relationship one with another in furthering their common objective—"For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."

The scripture makes clear another important point with reference to these officers of the Church. To his apostles Jesus said, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you." Paul amplifies this thought with the declaration that "no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." During those early years men in the Church were given office, not of their own choosing, but as they were selected and ordained by those who had been given power and authority of the Lord.

Latter-day Saints believe that this same organization with its basic offices has again been restored to the earth, and that men should fill those offices in the same spirit in which they were filled in ancient times. They believe that in this organization lie the keys and means of effective church operation.

## GENERAL OFFICERS

There are in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints three levels of organization—general, regional, and local. Presiding over its affairs in all the world is a council of three men called the First Presidency, consisting of a president and two counselors. Working with these leaders are members of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, who are called particularly to be “special witnesses of the name of Christ in all the world.” They form a traveling quorum regulating the world-wide activities of the organization. The President of the Church is chosen from the ranks of the Twelve.

Two other quorums and a patriarch, or evangelist, constitute the organization of the general authorities. One of these quorums is the First Council of the Seventy, consisting of seven men who preside over the various local quorums of the Seventy. These men are charged with the same responsibility with which Jesus charged the Seventy he called—to preach the gospel through missionary work.

A Presiding Bishopric of three men regulate the physical properties of the Church. Assisted by architects, landscape experts, engineers, and other trained men, they look after the widely scattered buildings and other facilities which represent an investment of millions of dollars.

But the Presiding Bishopric are not concerned only with such matters of a temporal nature. They are the heads of the Aaronic Priesthood. As such, they supervise the activities of the hundreds of quor-



ums of boys and young men ordained to this Priesthood.

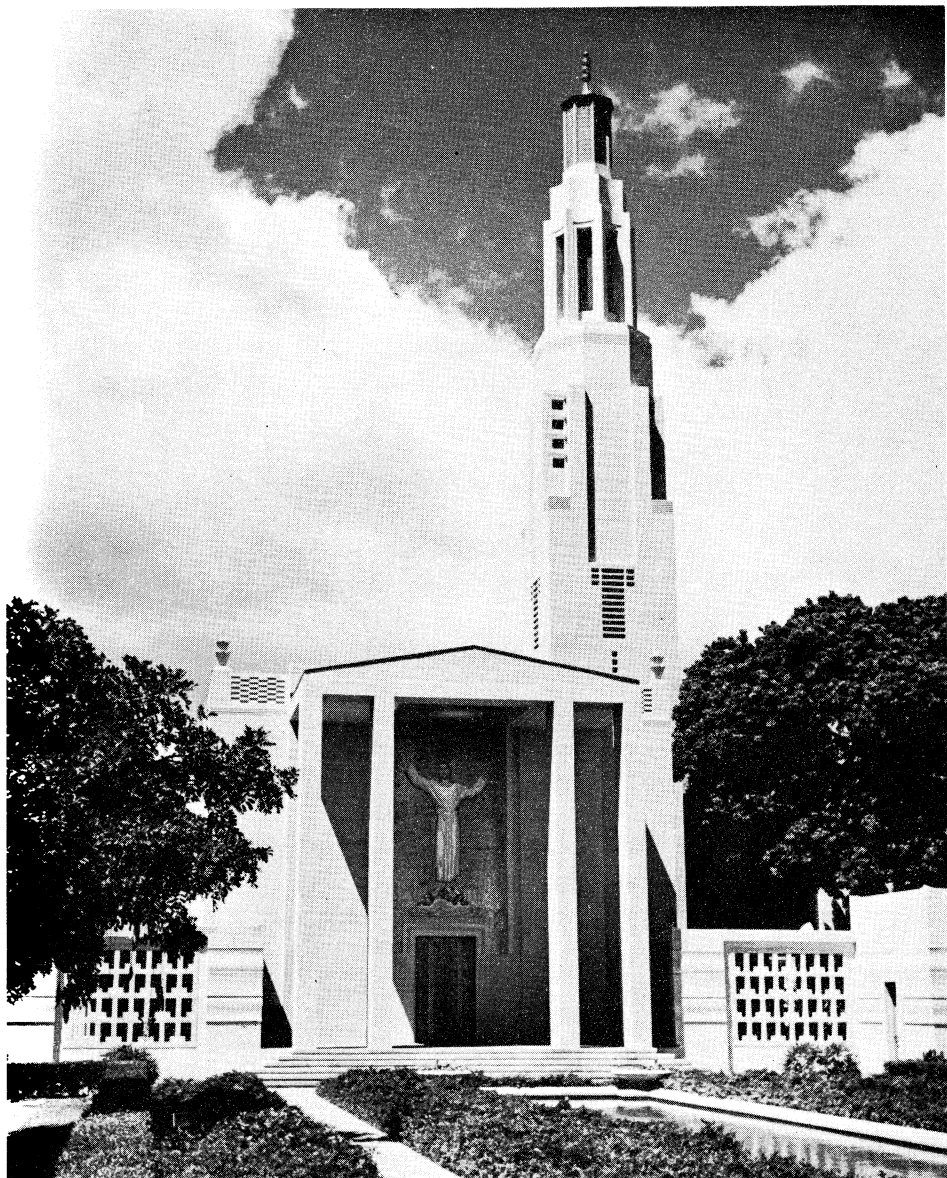
In addition to these general officers, are general boards standing at the head of the Welfare Program and the various auxiliary organizations. These bodies supervise the work of these agencies on a Church-wide level, setting policies, preparing courses of study, and directing activities through personal visits to the local groups. Those comprising these boards are qualified individuals carefully selected for their abilities.

The President of the Church is nominated from and by the Council of the Twelve Apostles, but he is voted upon by the membership. The same principle of common consent applies to all offices. No officer may serve without the consent of those over whom he presides. One of the established orders of business in all conferences is the "sustaining" of the officers of the organization.

### *STAKE OFFICERS*

The regional organization is somewhat analogous to the general organization. A stake is presided over by a presidency of three men—a president and two counselors. These in turn are assisted by a council of twelve men. One of the functions of this council is to sit in judgment in cases involving the excommunication of members. In such a Church trial six men serve as prosecutors and six speak in defense of the accused. Even in cases of apostasy, the apostate's case is defended.

Stake boards supervise the work of the various auxiliary organizations on a regional basis. These



### Oahu Stake Tabernacle, Honolulu, Hawaii

Such stake tabernacles accomodate Church functions on a regional basis. Conferences, teacher training classes, music and drama festivals are among the activities for which these buildings are utilized.

boards are comprised of outstanding teachers and administrators in the various wards. By means of visits to the wards and joint meetings with ward workers, they carry on a program of training in teaching procedures. In this way the ward workers are constantly aided in solving their problems and their teaching efficiency is increased.

### *LOCAL ORGANIZATION*

As indicated in a previous chapter, the ward is the local unit of Church organization. Assisting the bishopric of three men is a large corps of officers and teachers. In the average ward this group consists of about two hundred individuals. Each individual has a definite responsibility. It would be impossible for the bishop and his two counselors to visit the homes of all members more than once a year. The bishopric have, therefore, directly under them, persons called to work as ward teachers. These are men who visit each home at least once a month. They work in pairs, and each pair of teachers has only a few families to look after. They deliver any instruction the bishopric might wish conveyed, and they determine whether any family is in need of assistance. If there is financial distress or sickness, the ward teachers make an immediate report so that proper measures can be taken to see that the need is supplied.

Also each Priesthood quorum has a presidency, secretary, and various committees to see that the work of the quorum goes forward, and that the requirements of the members are met.

In each of the auxiliary organizations there is likewise a presidency of three, with secretary, chorister, organist, and a corps of teachers.

Within the democratic processes of these organized groups lies the genius of Mormonism. Every member of the Church who is willing and able has something to do. And within these various church functions he has ample opportunity to use his talents and be of service. Each has a responsibility, and in the discharge of that responsibility he studies and works. As he does so, his interest in the cause increases.

The result is an organization of highly qualified leaders. There is no monetary inducement to undertake such service. In fact, there must invariably be a considerable sacrifice of time and means. Out of all this grows the true Christian ideal of service.

The men and women who perform the many obligations incident to Church responsibility are ordinary citizens. Their unusual capacity derives from their belief in the efficacy of the gospel of Jesus Christ and their willingness to work to make it succeed.



# *The Mormons Yesterday*

## THEIR HISTORY

Genesis

An Angel and a Book

The Power of God Among Men

The Church Organized

Mormonism in Ohio

The Church in Missouri

Nauvoo, the Beautiful

The Martyrs

Exodus

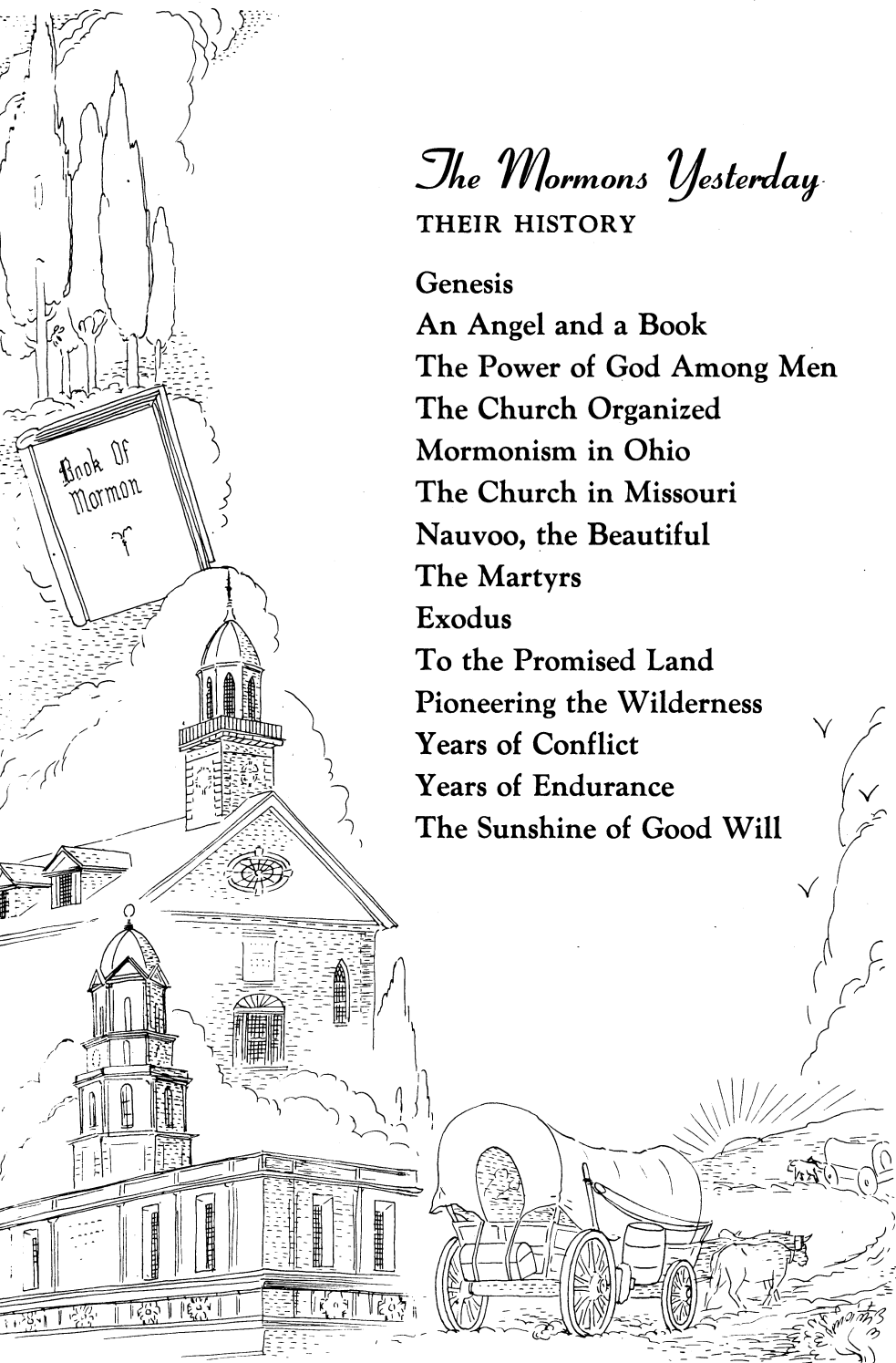
To the Promised Land

Pioneering the Wilderness

Years of Conflict

Years of Endurance

The Sunshine of Good Will





*Genesis*

WESTERN New York in the early nineteenth century was essentially frontier territory, a place of opportunity for those for whom the tremendous task of clearing and breaking the virgin land held no fears. Among these was the family of Joseph and Lucy Mack Smith and their eight children, who in 1816 came to the vicinity of Palmyra, not far from Rochester.

They were a typical New England family of English and Scottish extraction, who prized the independence their fathers on both lines had fought for in the American Revolution of 1776. And they were religious folk who read the Bible and had family prayer, although like many of their kind they belonged to no church.

This condition among the people of the frontier areas of America became a matter of serious concern to religious leaders. A crusade was begun to "convert the unconverted." It was carried over a vast area from the New England states to Kentucky. In 1820 it reached western New York. The ministers of the various denominations united in their efforts, and many conversions were made among the scattered settlers. One week a Rochester paper noted: "More than two hundred souls have become hopeful subjects of divine grace in Palmyra, Macedon, Manchester, Lyons, and Ontario since the late revival commenced." The week following it was able to report "that in Palmyra and Macedon . . . more than



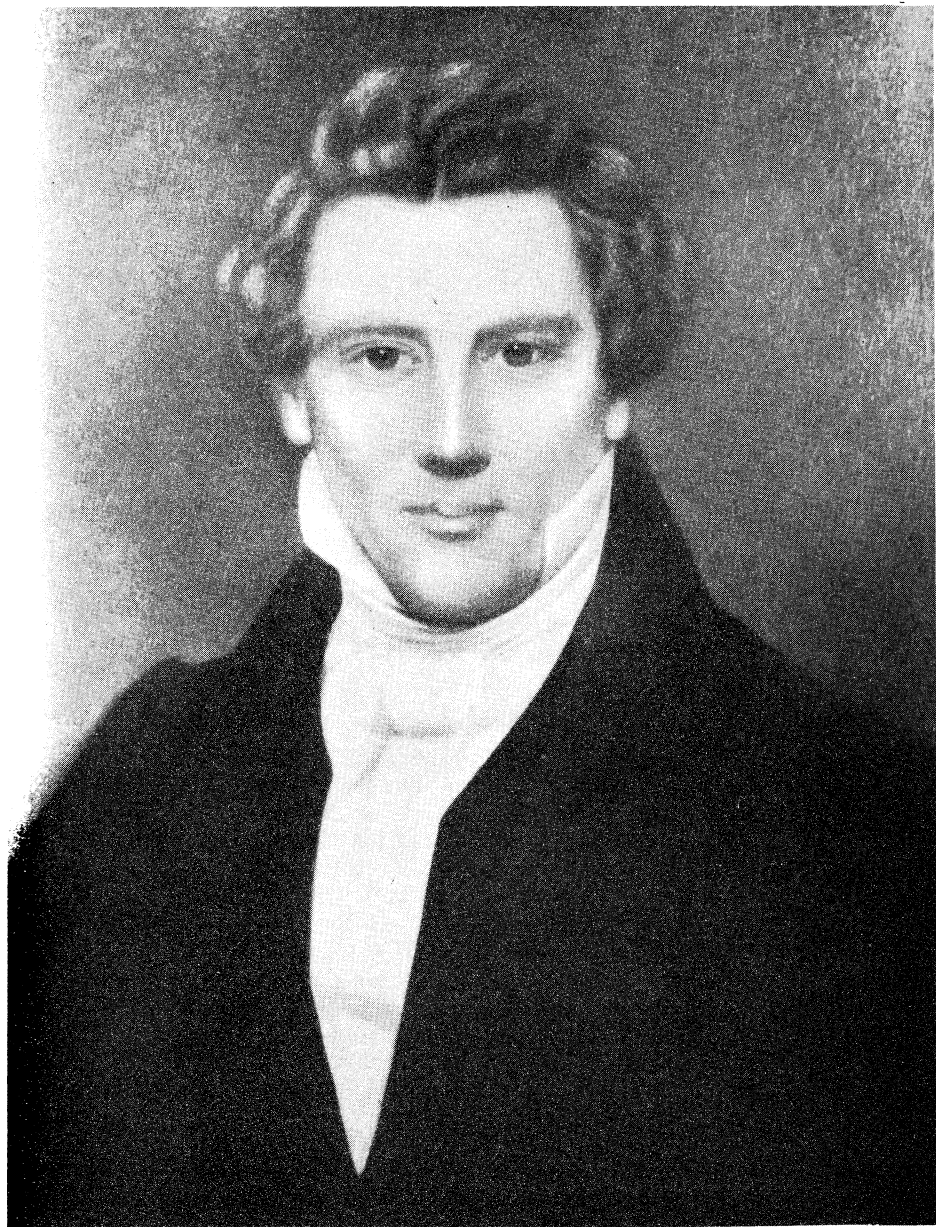
four hundred souls have already confessed that the Lord is good."

### JOSEPH'S STORY

Under the impetus of this revival four of the Smith family—the mother and three children—joined the Presbyterian Church. Joseph Jr., then fourteen years of age, also felt a strong desire to affiliate himself. But he wanted to be right in so important a step, and he became deeply distressed by the fact that although the various ministers had been united in their efforts when the revival commenced, they disagreed sharply among themselves when the converts began to file off to the various congregations. The more he listened to the conflicting arguments, the more confused he became. He reasoned that all of them could not be right, and the question as to which was recognized by God as his church greatly troubled him. In a simple, straightforward account, which has here been slightly abridged, he tells of the course he took and of the remarkable events which followed:

While I was laboring under the extreme difficulties caused by the contests of these parties of religionists, I was one day reading the Epistle of James, first chapter and fifth verse: *'If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.'*

Never did any passage of scripture come with more power to the heart of man than this did to mine. I reflected on it again and again, knowing that if any person needed wisdom from God, I did. For how to act I did not know, and unless I could get more wisdom than I then had, I would never know;



Joseph Smith, the Mormon Prophet

for the teachers of religion of the different sects understood the same passages of scripture so differently as to destroy all confidence in settling the question by an appeal to the Bible.

At length I came to the conclusion that I must either remain in confusion, or else do as James directs, that is, ask of God. I at length came to the determination to ask of God, concluding that if he gave wisdom to them that lacked wisdom, and would give liberally and not upbraid, I might venture.

So, in accordance with this my determination, I retired to the woods to make an attempt. It was on the morning of a beautiful, clear day, early in the spring of 1820. It was the first time in my life that I had made such an attempt, for amidst all my anxieties I had never as yet made the attempt to pray vocally.

Having looked around and finding myself alone, I kneeled down and began to offer up the desires of my heart to God. I had scarcely done so when I was immediately seized upon by some power which entirely overcame me, and had such an astonishing influence over me as to bind my tongue so that I could not speak. Thick darkness gathered around me, and it seemed for a time as if I were doomed to sudden destruction.

But exerting all my power to call upon God, and at the very moment when I was ready to sink into despair and abandon myself to destruction—not to an imaginary ruin, but to the power of some actual being from the unseen world, who had such marvelous power as I had never before felt in any being—just at this moment of great alarm, I saw a pillar of light exactly over my head, above the brightness of the sun, which descended gradually until it fell upon me.

It no sooner appeared than I found myself delivered from the enemy which held me bound. When the light rested upon me I saw two Personages, whose brightness and glory defy all description, standing above me in the air. One of them spake unto me, calling me by name, and said, pointing to the other, 'This is my Beloved Son, hear Him!'

My object in going to inquire of the Lord was to know which of all the sects was right, that I might know which to join. Therefore, no sooner did I get possession of myself than I asked the Personages who stood above me in the light, which of all the sects was right—and which I should join.



### The Sacred Grove, Smith Farm, Palmyra, New York

A section of the virgin forest which once covered the beautiful Fingerlakes area of western New York. Here in the spring of 1820, occurred the remarkable vision which led eventually to organization of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

I was answered that I must join none of them, that they were believing in incorrect doctrines, and that none of them was acknowledged as His church and kingdom; and I was expressly commanded to 'go not after them;' at the same time receiving a promise that the fullness of the gospel should at some future time be made known unto me.

### REACTIONS

As might be expected, so unusual a story caused considerable excitement. In good faith he spoke of it to one of the preachers who had been engaged in the revival. The boy was taken aback when the man treated the story with contempt, telling him that such things were of the devil, and that all visions and revelations had ceased with the apostles, "and that there would never be any more of them." Nor was this the end of matters for him. He soon found himself singled out for ridicule, and men, who ordinarily would have paid no attention to such a lad, took pains to revile him. It was a source of great sorrow to him. He continues:

Nevertheless, it was a fact that I had beheld a vision. I have thought since that I felt much like Paul, when he made his defense before King Agrippa, and related the account of the vision he had had when he saw a light and heard a voice; still there were but few who believed him; some said he was dishonest, others said he was mad, and he was ridiculed and reviled. But all this did not destroy the reality of his vision. He had seen a vision, he knew he had, and all the persecution under heaven could not make it otherwise; and though they should persecute him unto death, yet he knew, and would know to his latest breath, that he had both seen a light and heard a voice speaking unto him, and all the world could not make him think or believe otherwise.

So it was with me. I had actually seen a light, and in the midst of that light I saw two Personages, and they did in reality speak to me. And though I was hated and persecuted for saying that I had seen a vision, yet it was true, and while they were persecuting me, reviling me, and speaking all manner of evil against me falsely for so saying, I was led to say in my heart: Why persecute me for telling the truth? I have actually seen a vision, and who am I that I can withstand God or why does the world think to make me deny what I have actually seen? For I had seen a vision. I knew it, and I knew that God knew it. I could not deny it, neither dared I do it. At least I knew that by so doing I would offend God and come under condemnation.

On the great problem that had perplexed him, Joseph Smith's mind was now settled. He joined none of the churches that had sought his interest. And more important, he had learned that the promise of James was true: One who lacked wisdom might ask of God, and obtain, and not be upbraided.



## *An Angel and a Book*

LIFE for Joseph Smith was never the same once he had told the story of his vision. For one thing that remarkable experience had left an indelible impression upon his sensitive nature. The knowledge he had thus received placed him in a unique position. Nevertheless, his manner of living was not greatly different from that of the ordinary farm boy of his day, except that he was often referred to as a dreamer and was made an object of ridicule. But he continued to work on his father's farm and to work for others in the area, and to associate with companions of his own age. Those acquainted with him describe him as a strong, active boy of cheerful disposition, who enjoyed wrestling and other sports. The story of his life and experiences at this time is again best told in his own words.

I frequently fell into foolish errors and displayed the weakness of youth, which, I am sorry to say, led me into divers temptations offensive in the sight of God. In making this confession no one need suppose me guilty of any great or malignant sins. A disposition to commit such was never in my nature.

In consequence of these things I often felt condemned for my weakness and imperfections, when, on the evening of September 21, 1823, after I had retired to bed for the night, I betook myself to prayer and supplication to Almighty God for forgiveness of all my sins and follies, and also for a manifestation to me, that I might know of my state and standing before him; for I had full confidence in obtaining a divine manifestation as I previously had done.

While I was thus in the act of calling upon God I discovered a light appearing in my room which continued to increase



until the room was lighter than at noon day, when immediately a personage appeared at my bedside, standing in the air, for his feet did not touch the floor.

He had on a loose robe of most exquisite whiteness. It was a whiteness beyond anything earthly I had ever seen; nor do I believe that any earthly thing could be made to appear so exceedingly white and brilliant. His hands were naked, and his arms also, a little above the wrists; so also were his feet naked, as were his legs, a little above the ankles. His head and neck were also bare. I could discover that he had no other clothing on but this robe, as it was open so that I could see into his bosom.

Not only was his robe exceedingly white, but his whole person was glorious beyond description, and his countenance truly like lightning. The room was extremely light, but not so very bright as immediately around his person. When I first looked upon him I was afraid, but the fear soon left me.

He called me by name and said he was a messenger sent from the presence of God and that his name was Moroni; that God had a work for me to do; and that my name should be had for good and evil among all nations, kindreds and tongues, or that it should be both good and evil spoken of among all people.

#### *AN AMERICAN SCRIPTURE*

He said there was a book deposited, written upon gold plates, giving an account of the former inhabitants of this continent, and the source from whence they sprang. He also said that the fulness of the everlasting gospel was contained in it as delivered by the Savior to the ancient inhabitants [of America].

Also that there were deposited with the plates two stones in silver bows—and these stones, fastened to a breastplate constituted what is called the Urim and Thummim. The possession and use of these stones were what constituted 'seers' in ancient or former times; and God had prepared them for the purpose of translating the book.

After telling me these things, he commenced quoting the prophecies of the Old Testament. He quoted many passages of scripture, and offered many explanations.

Again, he told me that when I got those plates of which he had spoken I should not show them to any person; neither the breastplate with the Urim and Thummim; only to those to whom I should be commanded to show them; if I did I should be destroyed. While he was conversing with me about the plates the vision was open to my mind that I could see the place where the plates were deposited, and that so clearly and distinctly that I knew the place again when I visited it.

After this communication, I saw the light in the room begin to gather immediately around the person of him who had been speaking to me, and it continued to do so, until the room was again left dark, except just around him. Then instantly I saw, as it were, a conduit open right up into heaven, and he ascended until he entirely disappeared, and the room was left as it had been before this heavenly light had made its appearance.

I lay musing on the singularity of the scene and marveling greatly at what had been told me by this extraordinary messenger, when, in the midst of my meditation, I suddenly discovered that my room was again beginning to get light and in an instant, as it were, the same heavenly messenger was again by my bedside. He again related the very same things which he had done at the first visit, without the least variation. Having related these things, he again ascended as he had done before.

By this time so deep were the impressions made on my mind that sleep had fled from my eyes, and I lay overwhelmed in astonishment at what I had both seen and heard. But what was my surprise when again I beheld the same messenger at my bedside, and heard him repeat over again to me the same things as before, and add a caution that Satan would try to tempt me, in consequence of the indigent circumstances of my father's family, to get the plates for the purpose of getting rich. This he forbade me.

After this third visit, he again ascended into heaven as before, and I was again left to ponder on the strangeness of what I had just experienced. Almost immediately after the heavenly messenger had ascended from me the third time the cock crowed

and I found that the day was approaching; so that our interviews must have occupied the whole of that night.

I shortly after arose from my bed, and, as usual, went to the necessary labors of the day. But, in attempting to work as at other times I found my strength so exhausted as to render me entirely unable. My father, who was laboring along with me, discovered something to be wrong and told me to go home. I started with the intention of going to the house, but in attempting to cross the fence out of the field where we were, my strength entirely failed me and I fell helpless on the ground, and for a time was quite unconscious of anything.

The first thing that I can recollect was a voice speaking unto me, calling me by name. I looked up and beheld the same messenger standing over my head, surrounded by light as before. He then again related all that he had related to me the previous night, and commanded me to go to my father and tell him of the vision and commandments which I had received.

I returned to my father in the field, and rehearsed the whole matter to him. He replied that it was of God, and told me to go and do as commanded by the messenger. I left the field and went to the place where the messenger had told me the 'plates were deposited. Owing to the distinctness of the vision which I had had concerning it, I knew the place the moment that I arrived there.

### *THE HILL CUMORAH*

About four miles south of Palmyra is a hill of considerable size, rising abruptly on the north side and tapering to the south with a long slope. On the west side, not far from the top, as Joseph had seen it in vision, was the weathered surface of a rounded stone, the edges of which were covered with earth.

Eagerly he removed the earth so that he might get a lever under the edge. Lifting the rock, he looked into a box formed by a stone in the bottom with other stones cemented together to form the sides.

There, indeed, was the treasure! — a book of gold leaves bound together with three rings, the breastplate and the two transparent stones set in silver bows.

Anxiously he reached down to take them, when he felt a shock. He tried again and received another paralyzing shock. Yet again he reached, and this time the shock was so severe as to render him weak and powerless. In his frustration he called out, "Why can I not obtain this book?"

"Because you have not kept the commandments of the Lord," answered a voice at his side. The boy turned, and there stood the same messenger with whom he had conversed during the night. Guilt overwhelmed him, and Moroni's solemn caution and charge flashed through the boy's mind that Satan would try to tempt him because of the indigent circumstances of his father's family, but that the plates of gold were for the glory of God, and he must have no other purpose in mind in relation to them.

Thus rebuked, he was told that he should not receive the plates at that time, but that he should undergo four years of probation, and that during that period he should come to the hill each year on this same day. "Accordingly," he writes, "I went at the end of each year, and at each time I found the same messenger there, and received instructions and intelligence from him at each of our interviews, respecting what the Lord was going to do, and how and in what manner his kingdom was to be conducted in the last days.

"At length the time arrived for obtaining the plates, the Urim and Thummim, and the breastplate.

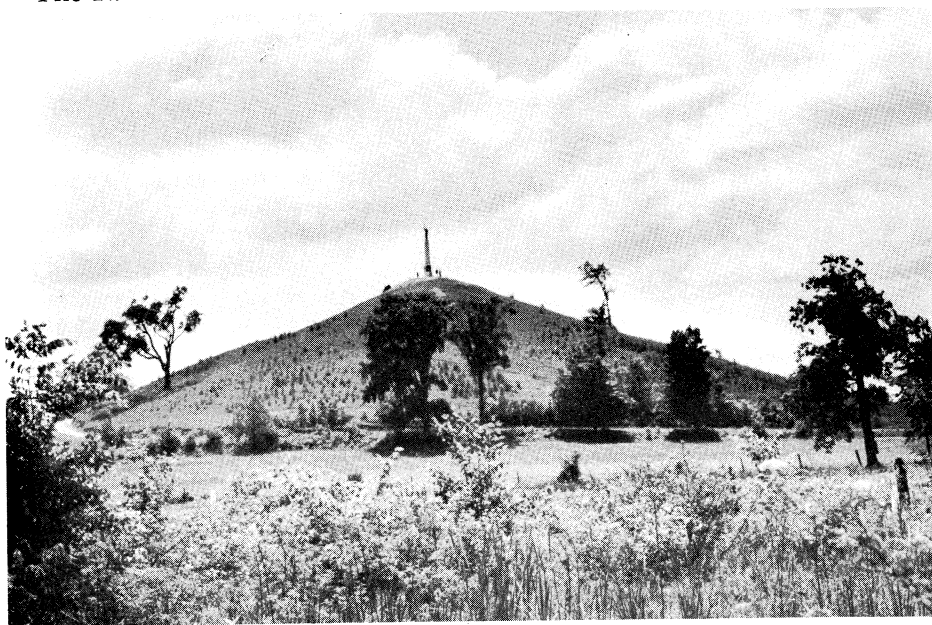


Joseph Receives the Plates

Moroni  
Monument



The Hill Cumorah



On the twenty-second day of September, 1827, having gone as usual at the end of another year to the place where they were deposited, the same heavenly messenger delivered them up to me, with this charge: That I should be responsible for them; that if I should let them go carelessly, or through any neglect of mine, I should be cut off; but that if I would use all my endeavors to preserve them until he, the messenger, should call for them, they should be protected."

### *TROUBLE-MAKERS*

Joseph soon learned why Moroni had charged him so strictly to guard the record taken from the hill. No sooner was it rumored about that he had the plates, than efforts were made to seize them from him. To preserve them he first carefully hid them in a hollow birch log. Then he locked them in a chest in his father's home. Later they were buried beneath the hearthstone of the family living room. A cooper's shop across the street was their next hiding place. All of these and other stratagems were employed to keep them safe from neighborhood mobs who raided and ransacked the Smith home and surrounding premises, and even employed the services of a diviner in their zeal to locate the record.

On two different occasions Joseph was shot at, and it soon became apparent that he could find no peace in the neighborhood of Palmyra. Some months prior to the time he received the plates he had married Emma Hale of Harmony Township, Pennsylv-

vania. He had met her nearly two years earlier when he boarded at her father's home while working in the vicinity for a Mr. Josiah Stool. And when in December of 1827, an invitation came from his wife's parents to live in their home at Harmony, Joseph accepted in the hope that he could there find the peace needed for the work of translation.

Once comfortably settled, he commenced work on the record. It was a strange volume, about seven inches in width by about eight inches in length, and about six inches thick. The golden pages, or plates, were not quite so thick as common tin, and were bound together by three rings on one side. About two-thirds of the plates could be turned freely similar to the pages of a loose-leaf book, but the remaining third were "sealed" so that they could not be examined. Beautiful engravings, small and finely cut, were found on the plates.

Joseph began his work by copying on to paper several pages of the strange characters. Some of these he translated by means of the Urim and Thummim, the "interpreters" which he had received with the plates. This appears to have been a more or less desultory exercise, but it served a singular purpose.

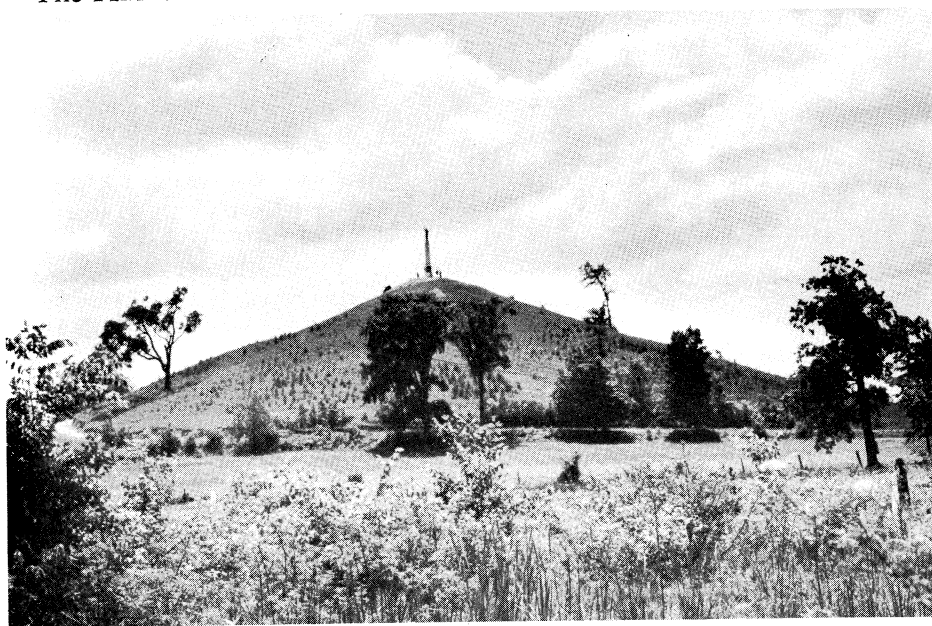
Not far from Joseph's New York home lived a substantial farmer by the name of Martin Harris. He had heard much of Joseph's experiences, and in contrast with most of the people of the community, he had shown a friendly interest in them. In February, 1828, Mr. Harris called on Joseph.



Moroni  
Monument



The Hill Cumorah

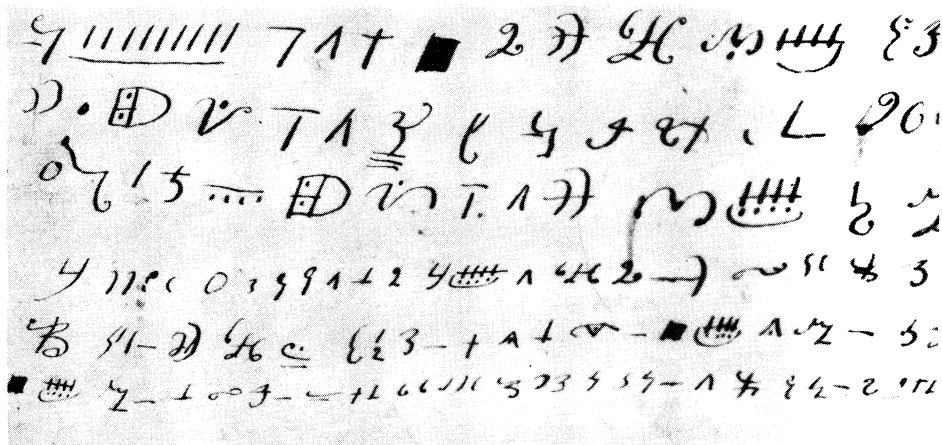


*"I CANNOT READ A SEALED BOOK"*

He was shown the pages of transcribed characters with some of the translations that had been made from them. They greatly interested him, and he asked permission to borrow them. Joseph consenting, he took them to New York City, and, according to his testimony, "presented the characters which had been translated, with the translation thereof, to Professor Charles Anthon, a gentleman celebrated for his literary attainments.

"Professor Anthon stated that the translation was correct, more so than any he had before seen translated from the Egyptian. I then showed him those which were not yet translated, and he said that

## Facsimile of Characters on the Plates



By June 14, 1828 Martin Harris had written 116 foolscap pages of manuscript from Joseph's dictation. Mrs. Harris for some time had importuned her husband to bring the manuscript home so that she might see it and he had asked Joseph for this privilege, but Joseph had denied him.

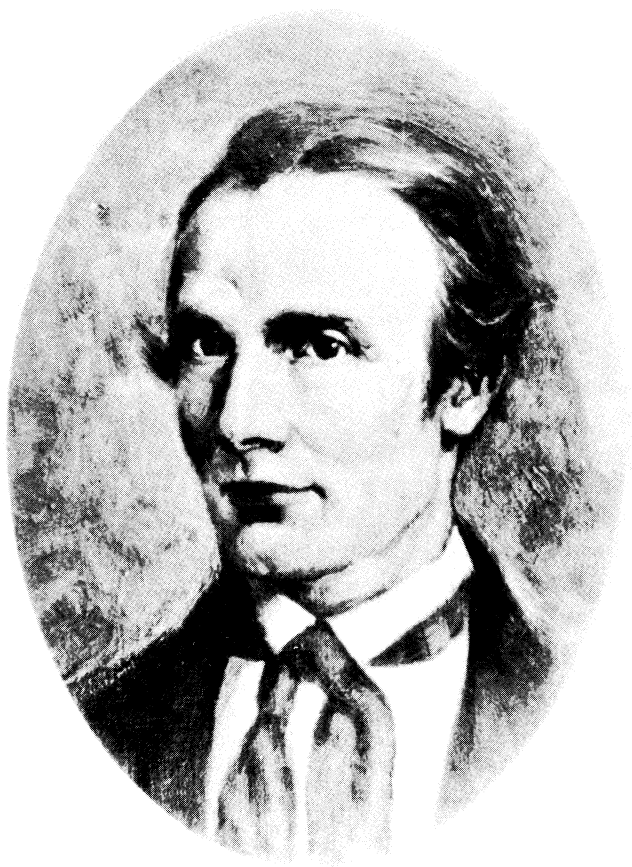
However, after much importuning Martin was permitted to take the manuscript, provided he would show it to none other than members of his immediate family. Martin agreed, but when he returned to his home he yielded to pressure from others who were curious, and the work was stolen from him.

Joseph Smith realized too late that he had made a serious mistake in permitting the translation to get out of his hands. He knew that he had done wrong, and he suffered great mental anguish. This was a lesson he never forgot; nor did Martin Harris ever forget it, for he was never again permitted to assist with the translation. The lost portion was not re-done, since it was evident to Joseph that his enemies could alter the original and publicly belittle him.

For the remainder of that year and the following spring he did little with the plates. Most of his time was spent in farming his own land and working for others.

### *UNFOLDING THE STORY*

On April 6, 1829 there came to his door a young man by the name of Oliver Cowdery. He was a stranger to Joseph, but he knew his family, having boarded with them while teaching school in the vicinity of their home the previous season. He had heard



Oliver Cowdery, Amanuensis to the Prophet

Acting as scribe, he wrote most of the Book of Mormon as Joseph Smith dictated the translation.

the unusual story of the golden plates and was determined to investigate it first hand. Two days following his arrival he commenced writing as Joseph read aloud the translation of the record.

They found an unusual story. In the main it concerned the descendants of a family which had left Jerusalem about 600 B. C. The father, Lehi, had been inspired to flee the city which was doomed to the sorrowful destruction which came shortly thereafter. Building a ship, the family crossed the ocean and landed somewhere on one of the American continents.

From this family sprang two nations known as the Nephites and the Lamanites. For the most part the Nephites were a God-fearing people; while the Lamanites were generally indolent, quarrelsome, and wicked. The Nephites had among them the history of Israel, up to the time the family had left Jerusalem, and with this they kept a record of their own nation as well as other writings. Prophets and priests taught them principles of righteousness.

Most remarkable of all, the Savior visited among these people, following his resurrection and before his ascension, in fulfillment of his statement found recorded in the Gospel of John: "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." He taught them the principles he had taught in Palestine, and set up his church among them, ordaining its leadership with the power he had conferred upon the Twelve.

Following the teachings of Christ, these people lived in peace and happiness for generations. But as

the nation grew prosperous it became wicked, regardless of the warnings of the prophets. Among these were Mormon, who in his day kept the chronicles of the nation. From these extensive records he had compiled on plates of gold an abridged record. This he had given to his son, Moroni, who survived the destruction of the Nephite nation at the hands of the Lamanites. Moroni, prior to his death, buried the record in the Hill Cumorah, where Joseph Smith received it some fourteen centuries later. The remnant of the Lamanite nation is found today among the American Indians.



## *The Power of God Among Men*

AMONG the doctrines taught in the ancient record was that of baptism for the remission of sins. Joseph Smith had never been baptized, for he had not become a member of any church. As he and Oliver discussed the matter, he resolved to inquire of the Lord concerning the ordinance.

They retired to the seclusion of the woods along the banks of the Susquehanna River. It was the 15th day of May, 1829. While they were engaged in prayer, a light appeared above them and in it a heavenly messenger descended. He announced himself to them as John, known in scripture as John the Baptist.

### *THE PRIESTHOOD RESTORED*

He said he had come under the authority of Peter, James, and John, apostles of the Lord, who held the keys of the Priesthood, and that he had been sent to confer upon them the Priesthood of Aaron with authority to administer in the temporal affairs of the gospel. He then laid his hands upon their heads and ordained them, saying: "Upon you my fellow servants, in the name of Messiah I confer the Priesthood of Aaron, which holds the keys of the ministering of angels, and of the gospel of repentance, and of baptism by immersion for the remission of sins . . ."

He then instructed them that they should baptize each other by immersion by the authority of the Priesthood they had received. Joseph first baptized



Oliver in the nearby river, and Oliver then baptized Joseph. Once again men had been baptized under the same authority and in similar manner as when Jesus had gone to John in the River Jordan "to fulfill all righteousness."

It was not long thereafter that another remarkable and even more significant event occurred. It took place "in the wilderness between Harmony, Susquehanna County, [Pennsylvania] and Colesville, Broome County, [New York] on the Susquehanna River." The ancient apostles Peter, James, and John appeared to and conferred upon Joseph Smith and

### Baptism of Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery



Oliver Cowdery the higher powers of the Priesthood and ordained them "to be apostles and special witnesses" of Christ. With this ordination there was restored to earth the same authority to act in God's name that had been enjoyed in the primitive church.

### WITNESSES

In June, 1829 the work of translation was completed. About three months of diligent labor had been devoted to the task, although Joseph had possessed the plates for almost two years. During all of this time he had exercised every precaution to safeguard them, lest he lose them. No one was permitted to see them.

But in the course of translation he had discovered that the record itself stated that "three witnesses shall behold it by the power of God, besides him to whom the book shall be delivered; and they shall testify to the truth of the book and the things therein, and there is none other which shall view it, save it be a few according to the will of God, to bear testimony of his word unto the children of men for the Lord God hath said, that the words of the faithful shall speak as it were from the dead."

As we have seen, among those who had materially assisted in the work were Martin Harris and Oliver Cowdery. Another young man, David Whitmer, had also been of service, though only for a brief period. When these three learned there were to be witnesses, they asked for the opportunity.

Joseph inquired of the Lord and subsequently announced to the three that if they would humble themselves, theirs might be the privilege of seeing the

ancient record and the responsibility of testifying to the world of what they had seen.

On a summer day in the year 1829, Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery, Martin Harris and David Whitmer retired to the woods near the Whitmer home in southern New York state. In the broad light of day they knelt in prayer, Joseph praying first, followed by the others in succession. But when all had prayed, no answer was received. They repeated the procedure again without result. After this second failure Martin Harris suggested that he withdraw from the group for he felt that it was he who stood in the way of their receiving a manifestation. With Joseph's consent, he left.

Again the three knelt in prayer, when presently they beheld a light above them in the air, and an angel stood before them. He held the plates in his hands, and deliberately turned them leaf by leaf before their eyes so that they might see the engravings thereon. They then heard a voice above them saying, "These plates have been revealed by the power of God, and they have been translated by the power of God. The translation of them which you have seen is correct, and I command you to bear record of what you now see and hear."

Joseph then left Oliver and David to find Martin Harris. He discovered him fervently engaged in prayer and joined him in an earnest petition to the Lord. That petition was rewarded with an experience similar to the one had by the others.

Based on this experience these men wrote the following signed declaration which appeared in the

first edition of the Book of Mormon, and which has appeared in every subsequent edition.

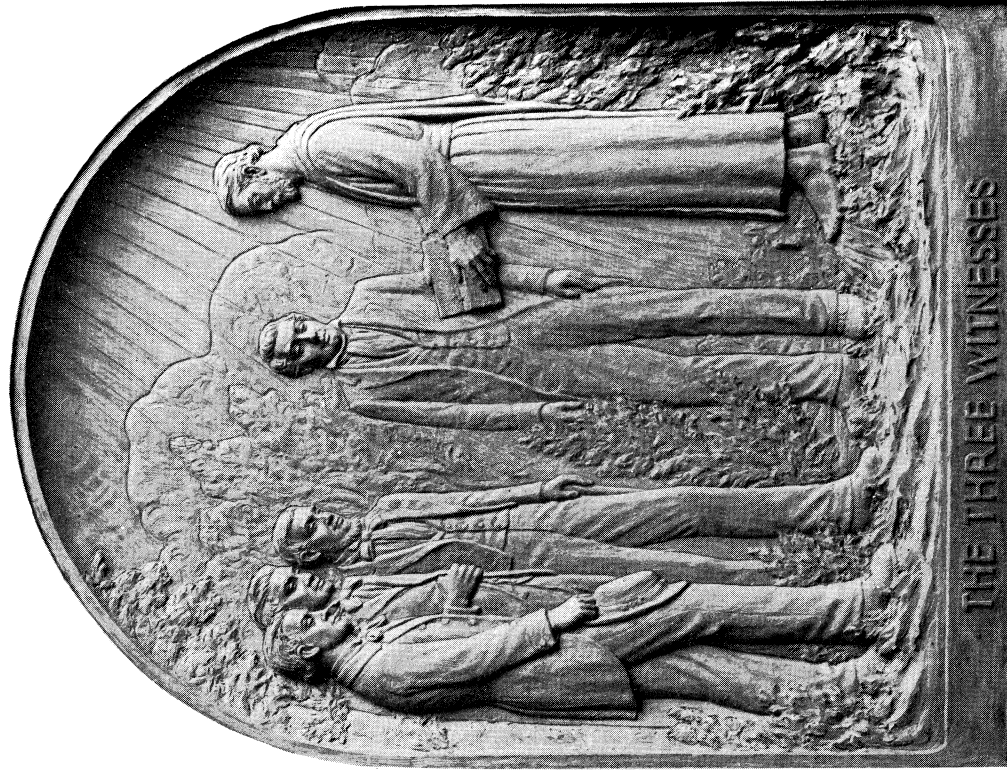
Be it known unto all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people unto whom this work shall come, that we, through the grace of God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, have seen the plates which contain this record, which is a record of the people of Nephi, and also of the Lamanites, their brethren, and also of the people of Jared, who came from the tower of which hath been spoken; and we also know that they have been translated by the gift and power of God, for his voice hath declared it unto us; wherefore we know of a surety that the work is true.

And we also testify that we have seen the engravings which are upon the plates; and they have been shown unto us by the power of God, and not of man. And we declare with words of soberness, that an angel of God came down from heaven, and brought and laid before our eyes, that we beheld and saw the plates, and the engravings thereon; and we know that it is by the grace of God, the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, that we beheld and bear record that these things are true; and it is marvelous in our eyes, nevertheless the voice of the Lord commanded us that we should bear record of it; wherefore, to be obedient unto the commandments of God, we bear testimony of these things.

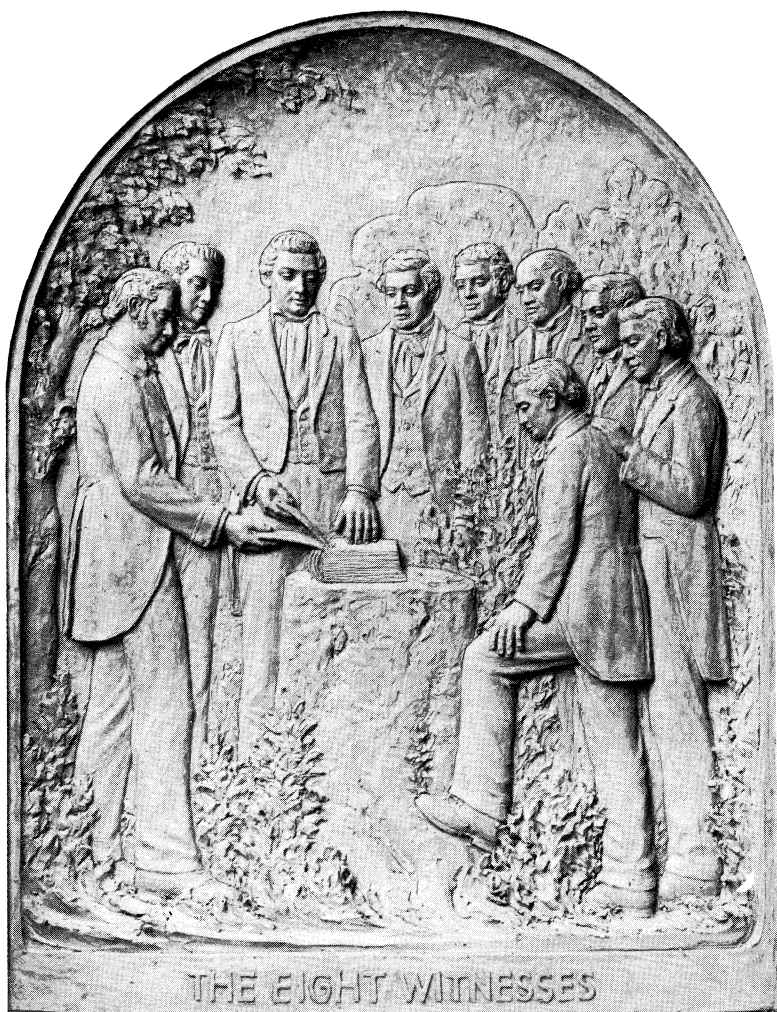
And we know that if we are faithful in Christ, we shall rid our garments of the blood of all men, and be found spotless before the judgment-seat of Christ, and shall dwell with him eternally in the heavens. And the honor be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, which is one God. Amen.

Oliver Cowdery  
David Whitmer  
Martin Harris

In addition to the three witnesses, there were eight others who saw the plates. Their experience, however, was without the miraculous element. It happened only a day or two after the three had been shown the record by the angel.



Three Witnesses Plaque, Hill Cumorah



Eight Witnesses Plaque, Hill Cumorah

Joseph Smith invited eight men to view the plates. They gathered about him, and he showed them the record. Again it was in the broad light of day. Each handled the strange volume with perfect liberty to leaf through the unsealed portion and closely examine the engravings. There was nothing of the occult, there was no manifestation of heavenly beings. It was a simple, matter-of-fact experience in which all participated together. Their testimony on the matter follows. It has also appeared in all editions of the Book of Mormon.

Be it known unto all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people unto whom this work shall come, that Joseph Smith, Jr., the translator of this work, has shown unto us the plates of which hath been spoken, which have the appearance of gold; and as many of the leaves as the said Smith has translated, we did handle with our hands; and we also saw the engravings thereon, all of which has the appearance of ancient work, and of curious workmanship.

And this we bear record with words of soberness, that the said Smith has shown unto us, for we have seen and hefted, and know of a surety that the said Smith has got the plates of which we have spoken. And we give our names unto the world, to witness unto the world that which we have seen; and we lie not, God bearing witness of it.

Christian Whitmer  
Jacob Whitmer  
Peter Whitmer, Jr.  
John Whitmer

Joseph Smith, Sen.  
Hyrum Smith  
Hyrum Page  
Samuel H. Smith

There are scores of writings dealing with the statements of these two sets of witnesses. For more than a century various explanations have been offered in an attempt to account for their testimonies on some basis other than the one the witnesses declared

to be the case. In the last analysis all of the circumstances—the fact that both experiences took place in the broad light of day, that there were two widely-different types of experiences, that all concerned were mature men of demonstrated judgment—these facts, together with the future acts and declarations of these parties, all point to the conclusion that the situations in each case were just as they said they were. There was no collusion, no chicanery, no juggling. In each case it was a sober, factual experience that no participant ever forgot.

All of the three witnesses left the church founded through Joseph Smith. Two of them took a strong position in opposition to him. But not one of them ever denied his testimony concerning the Book of Mormon. In fact, each, on more than one occasion up to the time of his death, reaffirmed that testimony.

Martin Harris and Oliver Cowdery returned to the Church after years of disaffection, but even when they were outside the organization, they boldly declared the validity of the statement published over their names in the Book of Mormon. David Whitmer never came back into the organization, but repeatedly he took the same stand as his associates had taken, and shortly before his death he published a pamphlet denying statements made in the *Encyclopedia Americana* and the *Encyclopedia Britannica* to the effect that the witnesses had repudiated their testimony.

Of the eight witnesses three left the Church, but not one of them ever so much as hinted a denial of his testimony.



*THE BOOK PUBLISHED*

With the completion of the translation its publication was made possible through the assistance of Martin Harris who pledged his farm to guarantee the printing costs. The work was done by Egbert B. Grandin of Palmyra, New York, who printed five thousand copies for \$3,000. The volume contained more than five hundred pages, and was called the Book of Mormon from the fact that the ancient prophet-leader Mormon had been its principal editor. It issued from the press in the spring of 1830.

As it was circulated and read another type of witness to its validity appeared, perhaps more powerful than the testimony of those who had seen the plates. In the concluding writings of the book are found these words: "When ye shall receive [read] these things, I would exhort you that ye would ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true; and if ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, he will manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost."

The majority of the early converts of Mormonism came into the Church through reading the Book of Mormon. Thousands gave their lives because of their beliefs. Since its first publication the book has been translated into twenty-two languages, and it has affected the lives of men and women in many lands. They have testified of this. The sufferings they have endured and the works they have accomplished have become perhaps the strongest of all testimonies for the reality of the gold plates and their translation into the Book of Mormon to become in this generation another witness for Christ.

## *The Church Organized*

NOT long after his ordination under the hands of Peter, James and John it was made known to Joseph Smith that the Church of Jesus Christ should again be set up in the earth. This event formally occurred the following spring, in the home of Peter Whitmer in Fayette Township, Seneca County, New York.

On Tuesday, April 6, 1830 six men gathered in the Whitmer home. There were others present, but these six participated in the actual organization proceedings in view of the fact that the laws of New York required this number in the formation of a society. Their names were Joseph Smith Jr., Oliver Cowdery, Hyrum Smith, Peter Whitmer Jr., Samuel H. Smith, and David Whitmer. They were all young men, their average age being twenty-four. All had been baptized previously.

The meeting was opened with "solemn prayer." After that Joseph asked those present if they were willing to accept him and Oliver Cowdery as their spiritual leaders. All agreed. Then Joseph ordained Oliver to the office of Elder in the Priesthood, and Oliver in turn ordained Joseph. They then laid hands on the heads of the others present and confirmed them members of the Church and bestowed upon them the gift of the Holy Ghost. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was next administered, after which others were ordained to the office of Elder.

While the meeting was in session Joseph received a revelation in which he was designated "a seer, a

prophet and apostle of Jesus Christ." Since that time he has been referred to in Church parlance as "the Prophet." The Church was also instructed at this time to keep a record of all of its proceedings, a practice since carefully adhered to.

### *THE NAME OF THE CHURCH*

The new organization was designated by revelation as the Church of Jesus Christ to which the phrase Latter-day Saints was later added. This is worthy of note. The Church was not named for Joseph Smith nor for any other man. Nor was it named for any peculiarity of government or function, as has been the case with many religious societies. It was the Church of Jesus Christ restored to earth in "the latter day," and it was so designated.

Another matter of interest is the manner in which the officers of the Church were selected. Joseph Smith had been divinely chosen to lead the work, but his position as leader was subject to the consent of the members. Ever since that first meeting in 1830, the members of the Church have convened periodically to "sustain" or vote on those chosen to direct the affairs of the Church. No man presides without the consent of the membership. A meeting was called for the following Sunday and on this occasion Oliver Cowdery delivered the first public discourse in the ministry of the Church. Six more were baptized at the close of this meeting, and a week later seven more were added to the rolls. When the first general conference was held the following June the membership totaled twenty-seven souls, and at the close of the conference eleven more were baptized in Seneca Lake.

In this same month the first missionary activity was undertaken. Samuel H. Smith, the nineteen-year-old brother of the Prophet, filled his knapsack with copies of the Book of Mormon and set off on a journey through neighboring towns to acquaint people with the newly-published scripture. After walking twenty-five miles the first day, he approached the proprietor of an inn for a night's lodging. When the inn-keeper learned of Samuel's mission, he ordered him out. The young elder slept that night under an apple tree.

The next day he called at the home of a Methodist minister, the Rev. John P. Greene, who was preparing to leave on a tour of his circuit. The minister was not interested in reading the book himself, but indicated that he would take the volume and keep a subscription list of any who cared to purchase a copy. Samuel returned home feeling that his efforts had been fruitless; it was unlikely that a Methodist minister would urge his flock to purchase the Book of Mormon.

But a strange thing happened. Mrs. Greene picked up the volume and became greatly interested in it. She urged her husband to read it and both later joined the Church. This same copy fell into the hands of Brigham Young of Mendon, New York. This was his first contact with the Church. Some two years later, after careful study and investigation, he was baptized.

The book, as it was circulated by Samuel Smith and others who followed him, had a similar effect on many such strong characters. Parley P. Pratt, a

Campbellite minister, chanced to read a borrowed copy, and soon forsook his old ministry to join the ranks of the newly-organized church. He took the volume to his brother Orson, later renowned as a scientist and mathematician, who soon thereafter threw all of his energy into promoting the new cause. Willard Richards, a Massachusetts physician, remarked after reading one page of the volume, "Either God or the devil wrote this book." He read it through twice in ten days and joined the cause.

And so the power of the volume increased. From it the members of the Church received the nickname by which they have since been known — Mormons. However, in their emphasis on this scripture of the western hemisphere they never lost sight of the Bible which they likewise accepted and strongly defended as the word of God.

### *PERSECUTION*

The work more often than not was bitterly denounced in that day of religious bigotry. Shortly after the organization of the Church, Joseph Smith was arrested while conducting a meeting in Colesville, New York. He was charged with being "a disorderly person, setting the country in an uproar by preaching the Book of Mormon." The testimony introduced was as ridiculous as the charge, but no sooner was he acquitted by the judge than he was arrested on another warrant of the same nature and dragged off to another town to stand trial, again to be acquitted. Thus began the persecution that was to harass him to his death



Willard Richards  
Boston Physician

### Early Converts

These prominent men joined the Church after reading the Book of Mormon.



Sidney Rigdon  
Campbellite Minister



Orson Spencer  
Massachusetts Educator

### *A MISSION TO THE LAMANITES*

The second general conference of the Church was held in September, 1830. Among matters of business was the call of Oliver Cowdery to undertake a mission "into the wilderness, through the western states, and to the Indian territory." Peter Whitmer, Parley P. Pratt, and Ziba Peterson were later called to accompany him. As matters turned out, this mission charted much of the future history of the Church.

In October the four men left their families and set out on foot. Near the city of Buffalo they met with members of the Catteraugus tribe of Indians to whom they told the story of the Book of Mormon, setting forth that it contained a history of their forefathers. Many appeared greatly interested, and the missionaries left copies of the book among those who could read.

Elder Pratt, prior to his conversion to Mormonism, had been a lay preacher of the Church of the Disciples founded by Alexander Campbell. He was now anxious to discuss Mormonism with his former associates, and the missionaries therefore traveled to northern Ohio where lived a large group of Mr. Campbell's followers. Elder Pratt particularly sought out Sidney Rigdon, one of the leading ministers of the faith.

Mr. Rigdon cordially received the missionaries, but was skeptical of the story they told. Nevertheless he permitted them to preach to his congregation, and he agreed to read the Book of Mormon. Soon

the entire district was astir. Elder Pratt described the situation with the statement that "faith was strong, joy was great, and persecution heavy."

### *A HARVEST OF SOULS*

Within three weeks 127 souls had been baptized. Before the missionaries left in December, Sidney Rigdon had become an ardent worker in the cause of Mormonism, and a thousand members had been added to the Church.

One of the recent converts, Dr. Frederick G. Williams, accompanied the missionaries west from Ohio. They spent several days among the Wyandot Indians who lived in the western part of the state, and then continued their journey to St. Louis, walking most of the way.

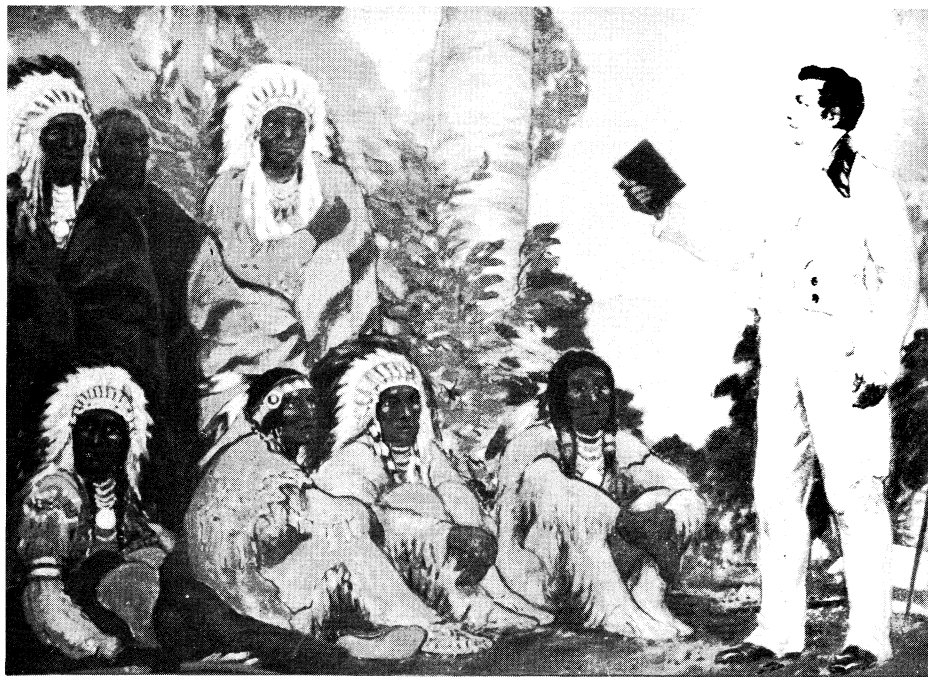
Of the journey from St. Louis, Elder Pratt writes: "We traveled on foot for three hundred miles through vast prairies and through trackless wilds of snow—no beaten road; houses few and far between; and the bleak northwest wind always blowing in our faces with a keenness which would almost take the skin off the face. We traveled for whole days, from morning till night, without a house or fire, wading in snow to the knees at every step, and the cold so intense that the snow did not melt on the south side of the houses, even in the mid-day sun, for nearly six weeks. We carried on our backs our changes of clothing, several books, and corn bread and raw pork. We often ate our frozen bread and pork by the way, when the bread would be so frozen that we could not bite or penetrate any part of it but the outside crust."



Arrived at Independence, Jackson County, Missouri, the elders made preparations to visit the Indians in the adjoining frontier area. They met with the chief of the Delawares who received them kindly and listened with great interest to the story of the Book of Mormon. After talking with them for some days, government agents, at the behest of intolerant religionists, ordered the missionaries from the Indian lands. Four of them remained in Missouri for some time, while Elder Pratt was requested to return to New York to report their labors to the heads of the Church.

### Teaching the Indians

Joseph Smith tells a group of natives the story of their progenitors as found in the Book of Mormon.



## THE FIRST MOVE WESTWARD

When he reached Kirtland, Ohio he was surprised to find Joseph Smith there, and to learn that the New York members of the Church planned to remove to Ohio in the spring. Persecution in New York had increased, and the success of the missionaries in their travels had pointed the way to the future destiny of the Church in the west.

The second annual conference was called for June, 1831, in Kirtland, Ohio. By this time most of the New York members had moved west, and the congregation present at the conference numbered two thousand. The Church had made substantial growth since the original six members effected the organization April 6, 1830.

At this conference several men were ordained to the office of high priest for the first time in the Church. Also twenty-eight elders were called to travel to western Missouri, going in pairs and preaching as they went. The Prophet pointed out that it had been revealed to him that the Saints would there establish Zion.

These missionaries, including Joseph Smith, traveled "without purse or scrip," preaching with power as they went, constantly adding to the numbers of the Church. They arrived in Jackson County, Missouri about the middle of June, and they were followed by the entire company of Saints from Colesville, New York who had settled temporarily in Ohio and then moved on west as a body. At a place called Kaw township, on a portion of the present site of

Kansas City, they commenced a settlement under the direction of the Prophet and Sidney Rigdon.

The first log for the first house was laid by twelve men representing the twelve tribes of Israel. The land was dedicated for the gathering of the Saints, and those present covenanted "to receive this land with thankful hearts," and pledged "themselves to keep the law of God," and to "see that others of their brethren keep the laws of God."

Thus was established the first Mormon settlement in Missouri. Later in the summer Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, and other leading elders returned to Kirtland, Ohio. For the next seven years the activities of the Church were divided between two locations a thousand miles apart, in and about Kirtland, Ohio, near the present site of Cleveland; and Jackson County, Missouri, near the present Kansas City.

## *Mormonism In Ohio*

THOSE years during which the activities of Mormonism were largely centered in Ohio and Missouri were among the most important and the most tragic in the history of the movement. During this time the basic organization of Church government was established; many fundamental and distinguishing doctrines were pronounced by Joseph Smith; the work spread abroad for the first time; and, concurrent with this development, the Church was subjected to intense persecution which cost the lives of many and from which all of the Saints suffered seriously.

While events of historical importance were going on in both locations contemporaneously, communication between the two groups was limited because of difficulties of transportation, although officers of the Church traveled from one location to the other as necessity required. For the sake of clarity we shall discuss in this chapter events in Ohio from 1831 to 1838, and present the Missouri story for the same period in the chapter following.

### *THE HOLY BIBLE*

One of the projects undertaken by Joseph Smith before his removal to Ohio was a revision of the English Bible. He did not discredit the King James' translation, but he knew, as has since been more generally recognized, that certain errors and omissions in that

record had led to numerous difficulties among the sects of Christendom. He had received his first understanding of this from Moroni, who on his initial visit in 1823, had quoted to Joseph Smith from the scripture, with the text altered somewhat from the language of our Bible.

Upon his arrival in Ohio, Joseph continued with this labor, working as time permitted. Though he was never able to complete it before his life was taken, the changes he made indicate some interesting interpretations of parts of the scripture. However, since the work was never finished, the Church has accepted the King James translation as its standard English text of the Bible.

We have seen how Joseph Smith and the Church developed as various questions and problems arose. He sought the Lord for guidance and testified to the world that he received it. Most of the revelations which have since regulated the Church were received during this Ohio-Missouri period.

### *DOCTRINAL STANDARDS*

These dealt with a great variety of subjects—the age for baptism, the organization and machinery of ecclesiastical government, the call of missionaries to special labors, counsel on diet and rules for healthful living, a prophecy on the wars that should afflict the nations, the glories of the kingdoms in the life to come and a variety of other matters. They reflect the breadth of the gospel, and the breadth of the Prophet's thinking. Only a few can be mentioned in this brief writing.

The question as to when an individual should be baptized has been a source of endless discussion among Christian peoples. In the second or third century the practice of baptizing infants was inaugurated, and has since continued, although without scriptural warrant. In fact, one of the fundamental purposes of baptism — the remission of sins — indicates that the recipient must be capable of repentance and the leading of a better life. The Book of Mormon clearly taught against the baptism of infants as a denial of the mercy of Christ, and in November, 1831 Joseph received a revelation establishing eight years as the age at which children should be baptized.

On February 16, 1832 Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon beheld a vision of the eternal glories. In the record of this experience they bear testimony of the reality and personality of the Savior: "*And now, after the many testimonies which have been given of him, this is the testimony, last of all, which we give of him: That he lives! For we saw him, even on the right hand of God; and we heard the voice bearing record that he is the Only Begotten of the Father—that by him, and through him, and of him, the worlds are and were created, and the inhabitants thereof are begotten sons and daughters of God.*"

They then describe something of the kingdoms of eternity which they saw. Men in the hereafter shall not be arbitrarily assigned to heaven or hell. The Savior had said, "In my Father's house are many mansions," and Paul had written of a "glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars." In the hereafter, according to the Prophet's

teaching, there are various kingdoms and degrees of glory; there are various gradations of exaltation. All men shall be resurrected through the atonement of Christ, but they shall be graded in the life to come according to their obedience to the commands of God.

Such teachings, flying in the face of traditional Christianity, were bound to stir the indignation of the intolerant. On the night of March 24, 1832 a mob broke into Joseph Smith's home, seized him while he slept, dragged him from the house, beat him severely, choked him into unconsciousness, and then tarred and feathered him, leaving him to die. But he regained consciousness and painfully made his way back to the house. The next day being Sunday, he preached a sermon, and among his congregation were some of the mobbers of the night before. At the conclusion of the meeting he baptized eleven people.

On the same night Sidney Rigdon was also mobbed. He was dragged by the heels for some distance with his head bumping over the frozen ground. For days he lay in a delirium, and for a time it appeared that he would lose his life, but he eventually recovered.

### *THE PROPHECY ON WAR*

On Christmas day of this same year, 1832, Joseph Smith made a remarkable prophecy opening with the words, "Thus saith the Lord." He prophesied that war would come upon the earth "beginning at the rebellion of South Carolina. . . . And the time will come that war will be poured out upon all nations."

He indicated that the Southern States would be divided against the Northern States, and that the Southern States would call upon Great Britain. The time would come when Great Britain would "call upon other nations, in order to defend themselves against [yet] other nations; and then war shall be poured out upon all nations. . . . And thus, with the sword and by bloodshed the inhabitants of the earth shall mourn."

Twenty-eight years later, in December, 1860, South Carolina seceded from the Union. On April 12, 1861, Fort Sumpter in Charleston Bay was fired on, and the tragic Civil War began. The forces of the Southern States were marshalled against those of the Northern States, and the Southern States in turn called upon Great Britain. Of the wars since that time, in which Britain has called upon other nations, and of the mourning and bloodshed of the inhabitants of the earth, nothing need be said in this writing. It is a matter of history known to all.

### *A WORD OF WISDOM*

In February, 1833 another interesting revelation was received and proclaimed to the people. It is known in Mormon literature as the Word of Wisdom and is essentially a code of health. In it the Saints are warned against the use of tobacco, alcoholic beverages, "hot drinks," and the intemperate eating of meat. The abundant use of grains, fruits and vegetables is advocated. A promise of "wisdom and great treasures of knowledge," together with



blessings of health, is given those who obey these principles. It is an unusual document whose principles have been confirmed in modern dietary science. The application of its teachings has had a salutary effect upon the physical welfare of those who have followed them.

### *EDUCATION*

In this same period Joseph Smith organized the "School of the Prophets." Through revelation he had been instructed that those who were to go forth to teach the glad tidings of the restoration of the gospel should first prepare themselves "by study and by faith." This did not mean that those engaged in the ministry of the Church should be trained in seminaries for this purpose, choosing the vocation as one might choose the profession of doctor or lawyer. Each man holding the Priesthood — and this was to include every man in the Church who obeyed the principles of the gospel — had the responsibility of learning enough of the work to enable him to expound and defend the doctrine.

Then too, it had been made clear by the Prophet that education was a concern of religion. Among his unusual teachings in this connection was the principle that "the glory of God is intelligence." Further, "Whatever principle of intelligence we attain unto in this life, it will rise with us in the resurrection." A broad development of the mind was, therefore, a rightful concern of the Church, and for this purpose the School of the Prophets was established. Not only

were there classes of a theological nature; a renowned linguist was retained to teach Hebrew. It was a remarkable innovation in adult education on the Ohio frontier, and was the forerunner of the extensive Mormon educational system.

### *CHURCH ORGANIZATION COMPLETED*

At the time the Church was established, its affairs were under the direction of a presiding elder. But through revelation other offices were added as the membership increased. Three distinct offices were established in the Aaronic Priesthood—teacher, deacon, and priest. In September, 1832 the office of high priest in the Melchizedek Priesthood was established, and in March of the following year Joseph Smith was sustained as President of the High Priesthood. Two counselors served with him, and these three constituted what has since been known as the First Presidency of the Church.

In February, 1835 a council of Twelve Apostles was chosen, and "seventy" were called whose major responsibility was to preach the gospel. The office of bishop was later designated. In 1835 the father of the Prophet had been set apart as patriarch to the Church, which office, the Prophet explained, corresponded to the ancient office of evangelist.

With all of these offices in the Priesthood set up and filled, there was again to be found in the nineteenth century the same basic organization which had existed in the Primitive Church with apostles, the seventy, elders, high priests, teachers, deacons, evangelists, and bishops.

In November, 1833 Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball, two men who were later to play an important part in the affairs of Mormonism, left their homes in Mendon, New York and traveled to Kirtland to meet Joseph Smith for the first time. They found the Prophet in the woods chopping and hauling wood. There began a long and devoted friendship between Joseph Smith and the man who was to succeed him as President of the Church. When that succession took place Heber C. Kimball was to stand beside Brigham Young as his counselor in the First Presidency.

### *THE FIRST TEMPLE*

One of the outstanding achievements of the people during the Kirtland period of Church history was the construction of a temple of God.

On May 4, 1833 a committee was appointed to take up a subscription for the building of the temple. It should be noted that these people had little in the way of financial resources. The leaders among them had been devoting their time and energies to missionary labors. Moreover, they had recently moved from New York to Ohio, and their means had largely been exhausted in the purchase of lands. Nevertheless, they had received what they regarded as a commandment to build a sacred house, and they set upon their task.

The question arose as to the plan and the type of materials to be used. Some thought that the building should be of frame construction or even of logs as was generally the custom on the frontier. Joseph then



The Kirtland Temple

Detail of  
Pulpits and  
Moldings



told them that they were not building a house for a man, but for the Lord. "Shall we," he asked, "build a house for our God, of logs? No, I have a better plan than that. I have a plan of the house of the Lord, given by himself; and you will soon see by this the difference between our calculations and his idea of things." He then gave them the plan. This was a Saturday night, and on the following Monday work was begun.

For three years the Saints labored with all their strength and means to complete the building. The men worked on the walls while the women spun wool and wove it into cloth for clothing. Of these trying days Joseph's mother writes: "How often I have parted every bed in the house for the accomodation of the brethren, and then laid a single blanket on the floor for my husband and myself, while Joseph and Emma slept upon the same floor, with nothing but their cloaks for both bed and bedding."

In dimensions the temple was 59 by 80 feet, 50 feet to the square and 110 feet to the top of the tower. The walls were built of quarried stone, and the interior was finished with native woods, beautifully worked. No effort was spared to create a house worthy of Deity.

After surveying the building as it now stands, a writer for *Architectural Forum* (March, 1936) said: "The workmanship, moldings, carvings, etc., show unusual skill in execution. Many motives are used in the various parts, varying in outline, contour and design, but blended harmoniously. . . . It is not probable that all of the workmen engaged on the build-

ing were skilled artisans, and yet the result is so harmonious as to raise the question if they may not have been inspired as were the builders of the cathedrals of old."

### A MODERN PENTECOST

The building was completed and ready for dedication March 27, 1836. This was an important day — the climax of three years of toil and sacrifice — and the Saints gathered from far and near. About a thousand of them were able to crowd into the building, and an overflow meeting was held in the school house.

The services lasted most of the day, from nine in the morning until four in the afternoon, with only a brief recess. This has gone down in history as a day of spiritual rejoicing. The Prophet offered the prayer of dedication, which of itself is an impressive piece of literature. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was then administered.

Since all who desired to participate could not be accommodated at the dedicatory exercises, the services were repeated, and for several days various types of meetings were held in the building and many spiritual manifestations were experienced. The Prophet compared it with the day of Pentecost.

The most significant of these experiences occurred on Sunday, May 3. Joseph and Oliver Cowdery were engaged in prayer in the pulpit of the temple which had been separated from the remainder of the hall by means of curtains. When they had risen from prayer they beheld a vision, recorded in the *History of the Church* as follows:

The veil was taken from our minds, and the eyes of our understanding were opened. We saw the Lord standing upon the breastwork of the pulpit, before us; and under his feet was a paved work of pure gold, in color like amber. His eyes were as a flame of fire; the hair of his head was white like the pure snow; his countenance shone above the brightness of the sun; and his voice was as the sound of the rushing of great waters, even the voice of Jehovah, saying: I am the first and the last; I am he who liveth, I am he who was slain; I am your advocate with the Father. [*Doc. and Cov.* 110:1-4.]

### EXODUS FROM OHIO

As the Church grew in numbers and spiritual strength, the forces working against it became more vigorous. Early in the year 1837 a bank was formed in Kirtland, among whose officers were the authorities of the Church. It was only a short time after this that a wave of depression spread over the nation. During the months of March and April business failures in New York alone passed one hundred million dollars. The Kirtland institution failed along with others, and some of the members of the Church who lost their money in the disaster, also lost their faith. It was a dark period in the history of Mormonism.

In the midst of this trouble, elders were called to go to Great Britain to open missionary work there. Heber C. Kimball was appointed to head this mission, and Orson Hyde, Dr. Willard Richards, and Joseph Fielding were called to accompany him. They were to meet John Goodson, Isaac Russell and John Snyder in New York City, and then proceed to their field of labor.

On June 13, 1837 the Kirtland men left their homes. They had little money and experienced con-

siderable difficulty in reaching Liverpool, where they landed on July 30, 1837. From Liverpool they traveled to Preston, a manufacturing town some thirty miles north, where Joseph Fielding's brother was pastor of Vauxhall Chapel. The missionaries were extended an opportunity to speak in the chapel on the following Sunday. Thus began the work of the Church in the British Isles, which in the years since has resulted in the baptism of more than 126,000 souls, many of whom have emigrated to the United States and become leaders in the cause.

Meanwhile in Kirtland, persecution increased. Mobbings and the destruction of property by bands of bigoted religionists increased. The Prophet could find no peace, and on January 12, 1838, accompanied by Sidney Rigdon, he left for Missouri, never again to return to Kirtland where so large and important a part of his work had been done.





## *The Church In Missouri*

WE return to the year 1831. Western Missouri was then a beautiful prairie country of rolling hills and wooded valleys. Its rich soil, pleasing contour, and equable climate made it a land of great opportunity. It was only sparsely settled; for instance, Independence, the seat of Jackson County, had only a courthouse, two or three general stores, and a few homes, most of them log cabins.

Joseph Smith indicated to his people that in this area, midway between the Atlantic and the Pacific oceans, they should build their Zion, a city of God.

Their missionaries to the Indians had returned with reports of the nature of the country, and in June of 1831 the first group of Saints arrived in western Missouri. About sixty of them had come in a body from Colesville, New York. Twelve miles west of Independence, on what is now a part of Kansas City, they laid the foundations of a settlement. The first log for the first house was carried by twelve men, symbolic of the twelve tribes of Israel.

### *THE CITY OF ZION*

Other members of the Church soon followed. Joseph Smith, who was then in Missouri, declared that they should acquire by purchase sufficient land that they might live together as a people. He pointed out the site on which they should build a beautiful temple, dedicated to God as his holy house. This

should become the crowning glory of the city of Zion.

The Prophet also designed the city. His was a novel and significant idea in civic planning. There would be none of the slums and blighted areas so characteristic of the cities of that day. Nor, on the other hand, would the farmer's family live isolated and alone. This city was to be a mile square, divided into blocks of ten acres with streets eight rods wide. The center blocks were to be reserved for public buildings. The barns and stables were to be on the lands adjoining the city along with the farms. "The tiller of the soil as well as the merchant and mechanic will live in the city," the Prophet said. "The farmer and his family will enjoy all the advantages of schools, public lectures and other meetings. His home will no longer be isolated, and his family denied the benefits of society, which has been, and always will be the great educator of the human race, but they will enjoy the same privileges of society, and can surround their homes with the same intellectual life, the same social refinement as will be found in the home of the merchant or banker or professional man.

"When this square is thus laid off and supplied," the Prophet continued, "lay off another in the same way, and so fill up the world in these last days."

While there was no opportunity to put the plan in all of its details into operation, its basic principles made possible the successful colonization of the west years later. The common practice of the time was for each man to settle on a large tract of land where he was isolated from his neighbors. But the Mormons

undertook the pioneering of new country in groups, building first a community with church and school and social opportunity where they maintained their homes, while their farms surrounded the town.

Among the first undertakings in the new settlement was the establishment of a printing press for the publication of a periodical, *The Evening and Morning Star*, as well as other literature. Appointed as editor of the *Star* was William W. Phelps, who, prior to his conversion to Mormonism, had served as editor of a paper in New York. He was a man of no small literary ability, and his journal soon became a significant force in the community.

### THE BEGINNING OF TROUBLE

With bright prospects before them, the Saints set to with a will to build their Zion. But they soon found themselves in serious difficulties. The old settlers resented their religion and their industry. Two ministers were particularly active in creating opposition. The Mormons were pictured as "the common enemies of mankind."

One situation that received emphasis was the fact that most of the Mormons were from the eastern states, while Missouri was linked with the South as a pro-slave state. In effect the Mormons were different from the old settlers, and the result was antagonism.

The first real indication of trouble occurred one night in the spring of 1832 when a mob broke windows in a number of Mormon homes. In the autumn of that same year haystacks were burned and houses

were shot into. These acts were but the beginning of a storm of violence that was eventually to sweep the Mormons from the state of Missouri.

In July of 1833 the old settlers, who had been agitated by troublemakers, met in Independence for the purpose of finding means to get rid of the Mormons, "peaceably if we can, forcibly if we must." There was no suggestion that the Mormons had violated any law, simply that they were an evil which had come into their midst, and which must be removed at all costs. They therefore demanded that no Mormon should henceforth be permitted to settle in Jackson County, that those residing there should promise to remove from the county, that they should cease printing their paper, and that other businesses should cease their operations. An ultimatum to this effect was drawn up, and a committee of twelve was detailed to present it to the Mormons.

The meeting was recessed for two hours to allow the committee to present the manifesto and return with an answer.

When notice was served on the Mormons, they were in no position to give an answer. The demands were entirely without legal warrant. The Saints had purchased the ground on which they lived; they had broken no law and had not been accused of breaking any. They were stunned by the whole affair and they requested three months to consider the matter. This was promptly denied. They then asked for ten days, and were told that fifteen minutes was time enough. Obviously they could not agree to the terms presented them.

## MOBOCRACY

The committee returned to the meeting and reported. The result was a resolution to destroy the printing press. Three days later this was carried into effect. A mob of five hundred men rode through the streets of Independence, waving a red flag and brandishing pistols, clubs, and whips. They swore that they would rid Jackson County of the Mormons. Every plea for mercy and justice was scoffed at. In an effort to save their associates, six of the leading elders of the Church offered themselves as ransom for the Saints. They indicated their willingness to be scourged or even put to death if that would satisfy the mob.

With an oath they were answered that not only they, but all of their associates would be whipped and driven unless they left the county.

Realizing their helplessness, the Mormons agreed under duress that they would evacuate by April, 1834. With this understanding the mob dispersed. But it was only a matter of days until they were again breaking into homes and threatening the Saints. Knowing there was no security for them, the Mormons appealed to the governor of the state. He replied that they should take their case to the local courts. Such a suggestion was ridiculous in view of the fact that the judge of the county court, two justices of the peace, and other county officers were leaders of the mob. Nevertheless, the Mormons engaged counsel to present their case.

As might have been expected, the court procedure was without effect, unless it served further to in-

cite the mob. On October 31 a reign of terror commenced. Day and night armed men rode through the streets of Independence setting fire to houses, destroying furniture, trampling cornfields, whipping and assaulting men and women.

Not knowing where to turn, the inhabitants fled north to the desolate river bottoms. Their trail over the frozen, sleet-covered ground was marked by blood from their lacerated feet. Some lost their lives as a result of exposure and hunger. Fortunately, their brethren in Ohio, on learning of their troubles, brought aid and comfort as rapidly as possible. Beyond the misery to which they had been subjected, their losses in Jackson County amounted to around two hundred thousand dollars, a considerable sum at that time. More than two hundred homes and been destroyed. And more tragic, their dream of Zion had been shattered.

### *IN UPPER MISSOURI*

The Saints found temporary refuge in Clay County across the Missouri River opposite Jackson County. To sustain themselves and their families they worked for the settlers of the area, doing all kinds of labor from wood chopping to teaching school. Temporary log houses were constructed in which they lived under wretched conditions until they might be able to secure themselves more permanently.

To the northeast of Clay County was a wild, largely unbroken prairie country. But they saw in it a land of opportunity, and others saw in it a place to

put the Mormons where they would largely be by themselves.

In December of 1836 the Missouri legislature created Caldwell County, with the thought that it should become a "Mormon County." With characteristic enterprise the Saints purchased the land, and proceeded to lay out cities and farms. Their chief settlement was Far West, and another major colony was planted to the north at Diahman. Two years after the creation of the county, Far West had a population of five thousand, with two hotels, a printing plant, blacksmith shops, stores, and 150 houses. Much of this growth had resulted from an influx of Church members from Ohio, including Joseph Smith, who, as we have seen, left Kirtland in January, 1838.

### *THE FINANCIAL LAW OF THE CHURCH*

During this period of intense activity, the Prophet pronounced as a revelation the law of tithing, under which all members "shall pay one-tenth of their interest annually." In other words, one-tenth of an individual's income was to be contributed to the Church for its work.

This was, of course, only a restatement of an ancient law. In fact, as with other matters of Mormon doctrine and practice, the institution of tithing in 1838 was but a restoration of a principle which had been pronounced in Biblical days. It had been the law of God to his people in Abraham's day, and in the times of the prophets who had followed him;



and now God had declared anew that his people should be tithed, and that this should be "a standing law unto them forever."

### *A PLAGUE OF SORROW*

On July 4, 1838 the Mormons in Far West held a celebration in observance of the nation's Independence Day and the freedom which they then enjoyed from mobs. On this same day they laid the cornerstone for a new temple. It was to be 110 feet long by 80 feet wide, larger than the structure in Kirtland. Band music and a parade, followed by a reverent dedication, made of this day a notable occasion in their lives.

But these conditions of peace and progress which they celebrated were to be short-lived. Their old enemies, noting the ever-increasing Mormon population, again sowed dissension. It should be remembered that Missouri was then America's western frontier. And the frontier was generally characterized by a spirit of lawlessness, of the bigotry that comes of ignorance and extremely limited social intercourse, of suspicion and jealousy. In such an atmosphere it was easy to fan latent fires of intolerance and hatred.

Such agitation led to a conflict in the town of Gallatin on August 6, 1838. It was a minor affair hardly worthy of notice but for the terrible consequences which followed. A non-Mormon candidate for the state legislature stirred the old settlers with statements to the effect that if the Mormons were allowed to vote, the old settlers would soon lose their

rights. It was a simple political contest. But when the Mormons went to cast their ballots, they were forcibly prevented from doing so.

An exaggerated report of the affair reached Far West, and a group of Church members went to investigate. No action was taken, and on their way back to Far West they called at the home of Adam Black, a justice of the peace, and obtained from him a certification to the effect that he was peaceably disposed toward the Mormons and would not attach himself to any mob.

But the enemies of the Saints soon made the most of this trip to Gallatin on the part of the Far West group. Several of them, including this same Justice Black, signed an affidavit to the effect that five hundred armed Mormons had gone into Gallatin to do harm to the non-Mormons of the area. This vicious falsehood was as a match to a pile of straw. Rumor chased rumor until a great fabric of imagined grievances had been built up.

To add to the gravity of the situation, an avowed anti-Mormon of Jackson County days, Lilburn W. Boggs, had become governor. To him the mobocrats sent reports that the Mormons were in insurrection, that they refused to submit to law, and that they were preparing to make war on the old settlers.

Again mobs menacingly rode through the Mormon communities, determined to wage "a war of extermination." When a group of peaceful, non-Mormon citizens appealed to the governor, he replied, "The quarrel is between the Mormons and the mob, and they can fight it out."

With such license, trouble spread like a prairie fire before a high wind. The Mormons endeavored to defend themselves. This immediately became an excuse under which the governor issued an inhuman and illegal order of extermination—"The Mormons must be treated as enemies, and must be exterminated or driven from the state if necessary for the public peace."

On the 30th day of October a mob-militia approached the town of Far West. Colonel George M. Hinkle, who led the defenders of the city, requested an interview with General Samuel D. Lucas, commanding the militia. During this interview he agreed to surrender the Mormon leaders without consulting these men. This was a piece of treachery which resulted in the delivery of Joseph Smith, Hyrum Smith, Sidney Rigdon, Parley P. Pratt and Lyman Wight.

A court-martial was held that night, and the prisoners were sentenced to be shot at sunrise on the public square of Far West. General A. W. Doniphan was ordered to carry out the execution.

To this order Doniphan indignantly replied: "It is cold-blooded murder. I will not obey your order. My brigade shall march for [the town of] Liberty tomorrow morning at eight o'clock; and if you execute these men, I will hold you responsible before an earthly tribunal, so help me God."

Doniphan was never called to account for this insubordination which saved the Prophet's life. As for the Mormon leader and his fellow prisoners, they were placed in a foul jail, where they languished for five months.

Greatly outnumbered and denied any semblance of legal protection, fifteen thousand members of the Church fled their Missouri homes and property valued at a million and a half dollars. Through the winter of 1838-39 they painfully made their way eastward toward Illinois, not knowing where else to go. Many died from exposure, or illness which was aggravated by it. The First Presidency of the Church were in prison, and Brigham Young, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, directed this sorrowful migration, which was to prove to be the forerunner to a yet more tragic movement a scant eight years later, and of which he was to serve as leader.



## *Nauvoo, The Beautiful*

THE people of Quincy, Illinois, received the Mormon refugees with kindness. However, it became quickly apparent to Brigham Young and others that some provision would have to be made whereby this large group of exiles could be settled and again undertake productive enterprise.

On April 22, 1839, Joseph Smith and those who had been imprisoned with him in Liberty, Missouri, arrived in Quincy. Their guards had let them go, and they had made their way to the Illinois side of the Mississippi. The following day a conference was called by the Prophet and a committee was detailed to investigate the purchase of lands. On May 1 the initial purchase was completed, and other purchases were subsequently made until extensive holdings were secured on both the Iowa and Illinois sides of the river.

The principal location was the site of Commerce, Illinois, about forty-five miles north of Quincy. At this point the river makes a broad bend giving the land on its east bank the appearance of a promontory. At the time of the purchase one stone house, three frame houses, and two blockhouses constituted the village.

It was an unhealthy place, so wet that a man had difficulty walking across most of it, and teams became mired to their hips. Of the place and its purchase, the Prophet later said: "Commerce was unhealthy, very few could live there; but believing

that it might become a healthy place by the blessing of heaven to the Saints, and no more eligible place presenting itself, I considered it wisdom to make an attempt to build up a city."

The Prophet's faith in the future of this site is evident from the name he gave it—Nauvoo, derived from the Hebrew and meaning "the beautiful location."

### *A DAY OF GOD'S POWER*

The swamps were drained, and a city was platted with streets crossing at right angles. But the work of building moved slowly. The people were prostrate, exhausted from the trials through which they had passed. Their energies were depleted and they became easy victims of malaria.

On the morning of July 22, Joseph, who was sick himself, looked about him only to see others sick all around. The house in which he lived was crowded with them, and tents sheltering other invalids stood in his dooryard. Wilford Woodruff recounts the events which followed the Prophet's appraisal of this discouraging situation:

He [Joseph] called upon the Lord in prayer, the power of God rested upon him mightily, and as Jesus healed all the sick around him in his day, so Joseph, the prophet of God, healed all around on this occasion. He healed all in his house and dooryard; then, in company with Sidney Rigdon and several of the Twelve, went among the sick lying on the bank of the river, where he commanded them in a loud voice, in the name of Jesus Christ, to rise and be made whole, and they were all healed. When he had healed all on the east side of the river that were sick, he and his companions crossed the Mississippi River in a ferry boat to the west side . . . . The first house they went into

was President Brigham Young's. He was sick on his bed at the time. The Prophet went into his house and healed him, and they all came out together.

As they were passing by my door, Brother Joseph said: "Brother Woodruff, follow me." These were the only words spoken by any of the company from the time they left Brother Brigham's house till they crossed the public square, and entered Brother Fordham's house. Brother Fordham had been dying for an hour, and we expected any minute would be his last. I felt the spirit of God that was overpowering his prophet. When we entered the house, Brother Joseph walked up to Brother Fordham and took him by his right hand, his left hand holding his hat. He saw that Brother Fordham's eyes were glazed, and that he was speechless and unconscious.

After taking his hand, he looked down into the dying man's face and said ". . . Do you believe that Jesus is the Christ?" "I do, Brother Joseph," was the response. Then the Prophet of God spoke with a loud voice, as in the majesty of Jehovah: "Elijah, I command you, in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, to rise and be made whole."

The words of the Prophet were not like the words of a man, but like the voice of God. It seemed to me that the house shook on its foundation. Elijah Fordham leaped from his bed like a man raised from the dead. A healthy color came into his face, and life was manifested in every act. His feet had been done up in Indian meal poultices; these he kicked off, scattering the contents, and then called for his clothes and put them on. He asked for a bowl of bread and milk and ate it. He then put on his hat and followed us into the street, to visit others who were sick.

Elijah Fordham lived forty-one years after that. This occasion has gone down in the history of the Church as "a day of God's power."

## *A MISSION TO ENGLAND*

Even while facing the task of building a city, the Mormons did not neglect the preaching of the



gospel. During the summer of 1839, seven members of the Council of the Twelve Apostles left Nauvoo for England.

These men were powerful missionaries. The trials through which they had passed had strengthened their convictions concerning the cause with which they were associated, and they won hundreds of converts through the powerful testimonies which they bore.

Wilford Woodruff's efforts were particularly successful. While preaching in Hanley in the Potteries district of England, he felt impressed to leave that area without knowing why. Obedient to this impression, he traveled to a rural section of Herefordshire. At the home of one John Benbow, a substantial farmer of the district, he received a cordial welcome and the news that a large group of religionists in that area had broken away from their church and had united themselves to study the scriptures and seek the truth.

Elder Woodruff was given an invitation to speak, and other invitations followed. The organization numbered six hundred, including more than a score of preachers. All of these, with one exception, embraced Mormonism. Before he left the district, eighteen hundred members had been converted to the Church through his efforts.

At a conference held in the British Isles in April, 1840, the decision was made to publish an edition of the Book of Mormon, a hymn book, and a periodical. The latter, called the *Millennial Star*, has been published continuously since that time, and is the oldest periodical in the Church.

An unusual mission undertaken during this period was that of Orson Hyde. Elder Hyde was apparently a descendant of the tribe of Judah, and after the Prophet had become acquainted with him, he pronounced a blessing upon his head in which he said: "In due time thou shalt go to Jerusalem, the land of thy fathers, and be a watchman unto the house of Israel; and by thy hand shall the Most High do a work, which shall prepare the way and greatly facilitate the gathering together of that people."

He left the States in January, 1841, going to London where he labored with other missionaries for some months. Then he made his way to Palestine. Early on a Sunday morning, October 24, 1841, he climbed to the top of the Mount of Olives, and there in prayer, in the authority of the Priesthood, he dedicated the land of Palestine for the return of the Jews. The prayer reads in part:

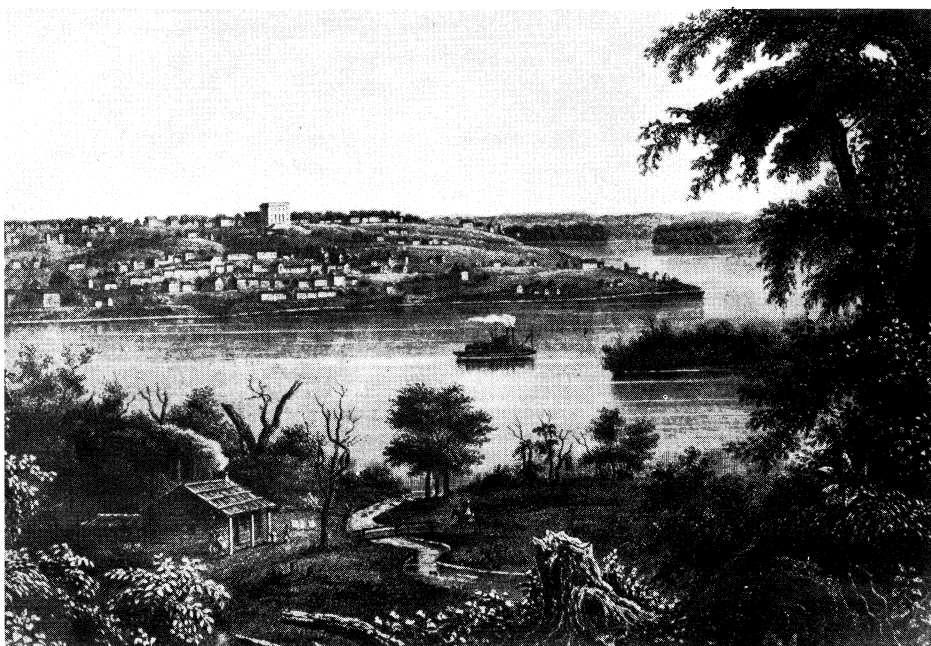
Grant, therefore, O Lord, in the name of Thy well-beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to remove the barrenness and sterility of this land, and let springs of living water break forth to water its thirsty soil. Let the vine and olive produce in their strength, and the fig tree bloom and flourish . . . . Let the flocks and herds greatly increase and multiply upon the mountains and the hills, and let Thy great kindness conquer and subdue the unbelief of Thy people. Do Thou take from them their stony heart, and give them a heart of flesh; and may the sun of Thy favor dispel the cold mists of darkness which have beclouded their atmosphere . . . . Let kings become their nursing fathers, and queens with motherly fondness wipe the tear of sorrow from their eye . . . .

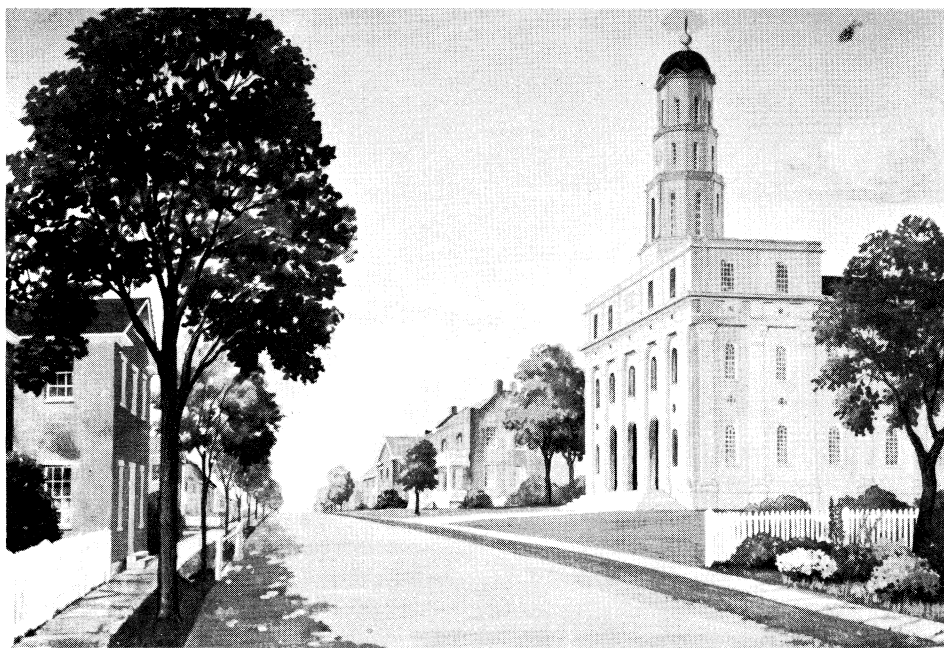
Following the prayer, he erected a pile of stones as an altar and a witness of his act. With his mission completed, he returned to Nauvoo, arriving in December, 1842.



Mansion House—Nauvoo Home of Joseph Smith

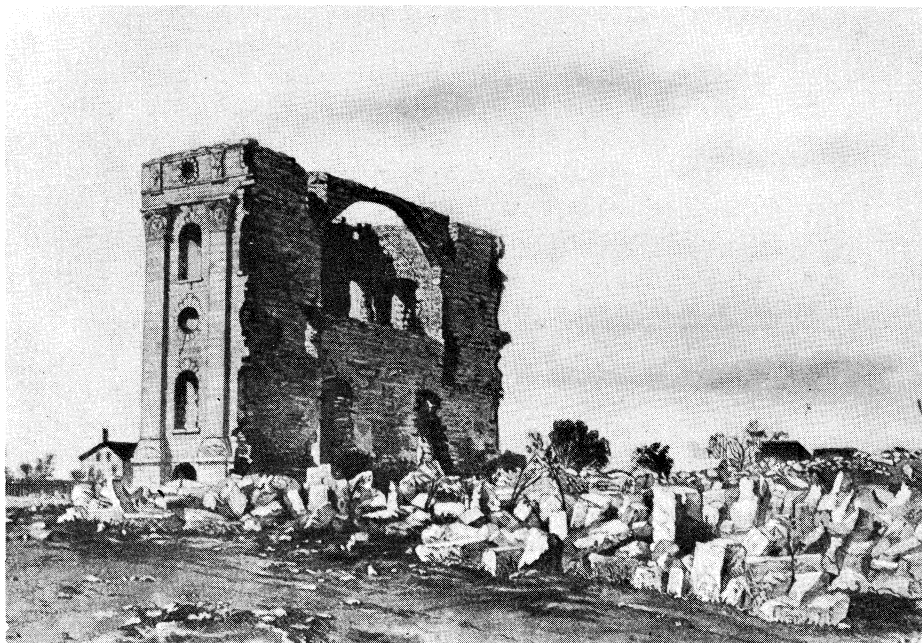
Nauvoo from the Iowa Side of the River





Nauvoo, the Beautiful

The Temple in Ruins



### *A CITY FROM THE SWAMPS*

Meanwhile, things had been happening in the western Illinois colony. Homes, shops and gardens rose from what had been the swamps of Commerce. But because of the extreme poverty in which these people found themselves, their problems were greatly aggravated. Several unsuccessful attempts were made to secure compensation and redress for the losses they had suffered in Missouri. The most notable of these was a petition to the Congress of the United States and an interview between Joseph Smith and the President of the United States, Martin Van Buren.

The petition availed nothing, and Mr. Van Buren replied with a statement which has become famous in Mormon history: "Your cause is just, but I can do nothing for you. . . . If I take up with you, I shall lose the vote of Missouri."

The governor of Missouri reacted to these efforts by requisitioning the governor of Illinois to arrest and deliver Joseph Smith and five of his associates as fugitives from justice, although two years had elapsed since they had been allowed to escape from imprisonment in Missouri. The Illinois governor honored the requisition, but on a writ of habeas corpus, Judge Stephen A. Douglas released the defendants. This action, however, only delayed the Missourians in the execution of their avowed purposes.

### *THE BUILDING OF THE TEMPLE*

During this same period a decision was made to build a temple in Nauvoo. This sacred edifice was to

be reserved for special ordinance work, including baptism for the dead.

The doctrine whereby one who has opportunity for baptism and exercises it is saved, while he who does not have opportunity is damned, has always appeared unjust to many people. And yet the scripture reads, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." The law is all-inclusive. Joseph Smith resolved this question with the doctrine of vicarious baptism for the dead, announcing it as a revelation from God. When performed under proper authority baptism may be received by living proxies acting in behalf of the dead. Such a practice existed in the primitive church. This is attested by the words of Paul to the Corinthians: "Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead?"

To provide facilities for such vicarious work, as well as for other sacred ordinances, the Prophet was commanded through revelation to erect a temple. On April 6, 1841, ten thousand members of the Church assembled for the laying of the cornerstones of this structure. By November 8 the baptismal font was completed, and by October 30, 1842 the building had progressed sufficiently to permit the holding of meetings in some rooms. However, it was April 30, 1846, after most of the Saints had left Nauvoo, before it was completed in detail. The building cost a million dollars, and at the time it was regarded as the finest structure in the state of Illinois.

This magnificent edifice stood on the highest elevation of the city, and commanded a view of the

entire countryside on both sides of the river. It became the crown of Nauvoo, which in itself was remarkable in contrast with most of the frontier towns of America, and which prior to its evacuation was the largest then in Illinois.

Many distinguished visitors called at Nauvoo during this period of intense activity. In 1843 an English writer described the Mormon community in an article which was widely published:

The city is of great dimensions, laid out in beautiful order; the streets are wide, and cross each other at right angles, which will add greatly to its order and magnificence when finished. The city rises on a gentle incline from the rolling Mississippi, and as you stand near the temple, you may gaze on the picturesque scenery around; at your side is the temple, the wonder of the world; round about, and beneath, you may behold handsome stores, large mansions, and fine cottages, interspersed with varied scenery . . . Peace and harmony reign in the city. The drunkard is scarcely even seen, as in other cities, neither does the awful imprecation or profane oath strike upon your ear; but, while all is storm, and tempest, and confusion abroad respecting the Mormons, all is peace and harmony at home.

Colonel Thomas L. Kane visited Nauvoo three years later. His description is particularly interesting:

Ascending the upper Mississippi in the autumn, when the waters were low, I was compelled to travel by land past the region of the Rapids . . . My eye wearied to see everywhere sordid, vagabond and idle settlers, a country marred, without being improved, by their careless hands. I was descending the last hillside upon my journey when a landscape in delightful contrast broke upon my view. Half encircled by a bend of the river, a beautiful city lay glittering in the fresh morning sun; its bright, new dwellings, set in cool green gardens, ranging up around a stately dome-shaped hill, which was covered by a noble marble edifice, whose high tapering spire was radiant with white

and gold. The city appeared to cover several miles; and beyond it, in the background, there rolled off a fair country, chequered by the careful lines of fruitful husbandry. The unmistakable marks of industry, enterprise and educated wealth everywhere, made the scene one of singular and most striking beauty.

Visitors who came to Nauvoo were impressed by the man under whose direction this remarkable city had risen from disease-ridden swamps. The Prophet at this time was at the zenith of his career. Many of those who knew him during this period have left descriptions of him. He was well-built, about six feet tall in his stocking feet, and weighed about two hundred pounds. His eyes were blue, his hair brown and wavy, his skin clear and almost beardless. He was a man of great energy and dignified bearing, but was at the same time friendly.

After visiting him the Masonic Grand Master of the state of Illinois wrote:

On the subject of religion we widely differed, but he appeared to be quite as willing to permit me to enjoy my right of opinion as I think we all ought to be to let the Mormons enjoy theirs. But instead of the ignorant and tyrannical upstart, judge my surprise at finding him a sensible, intelligent companion and gentlemanly man.

One of the most distinguished men to visit Joseph Smith during this period was Josiah Quincy who had been mayor of Boston. Out of his impressions of the Prophet he later wrote:

It is by no means improbable that some future textbook . . . will contain a question something like this: What historical American of the nineteenth century has exerted the most powerful influence upon the destinies of his countrymen? And it is by



no means impossible that the answer to the interrogatory may be thus written: *Joseph Smith, the Mormon Prophet . . .*

Born in the lowest ranks of poverty, without book-learning and with the homeliest of human names, he had made himself at the age of thirty-nine a power upon earth. Of all the multitudinous family of Smith, from Adam down [Adam of the "Wealth of Nations" I mean] none has so won human hearts and shaped human lives as this Joseph.

Such was the reaction of strangers who came to Nauvoo and called upon its most prominent citizen.

In 1839 the Mormons had purchased land so swampy that a horse had difficulty walking across it. By 1844 they had built on this same ground a city without equal on all of the American frontier. Sturdy brick homes, some of which are still occupied, broad farms and orchards, shops, schools, and a magnificent temple — with twenty thousand citizens, gathered not only from the eastern states and Canada, but from the British Isles as well. This was Nauvoo — the Beautiful!

## *The Martyrs*

ON the evening of May 6, 1842, former-governor Lilburn W. Boggs of Missouri was sitting in his home when an unknown assailant fired a pistol through the window and seriously wounded him. The pistol was found on the grounds, but the would-be assassin was not apprehended. It was feared for a time that Boggs would die, but he eventually recovered.

Because he had taken such a prominent part in expelling the Mormons from the state, it was soon rumored that they were responsible for the deed. The ex-governor, without any apparent foundation for his act, made an affidavit accusing O. P. Rockwell, a member of the Church, of the crime. He followed this with a second affidavit charging Joseph Smith as accessory before the fact. The governor of Missouri was then asked to requisition the governor of Illinois to deliver Joseph Smith and O. P. Rockwell to a representative of the state of Missouri.

A warrant was issued and the men were arrested, but were released after trial on a writ of habeas corpus. The plans of the Missouri enemies of the Prophet had gone awry, but they were not to be frustrated so easily.

### *ENEMIES FROM WITHIN*

In 1840 a Dr. John C. Bennett had allied himself with the Mormon cause. He was a man gifted in many lines, educated and capable, but unprincipled.

Because of his abilities he was given a number of important responsibilities. But he became involved in moral offenses and was chastised by Joseph Smith. He retaliated by leaving Nauvoo and publishing a book against the Church. Then he got in touch with the enemies of the Church in Missouri, there adding fuel to the smoldering fire of hatred. The result of this was another plot for the arrest of Joseph Smith. But this again came to nothing.

There was another group in Nauvoo, however, whose nefarious work was to meet with greater success. Six men—William and Wilson Law, Frances M. and Chauncey L. Higbee, and Charles A. and Robert D. Foster—had been disfellowshipped from the Church, whereupon they determined to ruin the Prophet.

Added to these difficulties was the political situation. The Mormons voted for men whose policies they thought would lead to the greatest good, sometimes the candidates of one party and sometimes those of another. In the presidential campaign of 1844, disagreeing with the policies of both major parties, they steered a middle course by nominating Joseph Smith as a candidate for the office of President of the United States with Sidney Rigdon as Vice-president. The Mormon leader issued a statement of his views on government which attracted the attention of many. Among other things he advocated that the government solve the slave problem by purchasing the negroes, thus freeing the slaves and compensating their owners—a policy which if followed likely would have saved the treasure and lives later sacrificed in the Civil War. He further suggested that

prisons be made schools where offenders might be taught useful trades and thus become valuable members of society.

To further acquaint the people of the nation with the Prophet's views, large numbers of men left Nauvoo to campaign for his candidacy. It was while many of these men were absent from Nauvoo that the Prophet's troubles reached a climax.

On June 10, 1844 the six men named above published a libelous sheet called the *Nauvoo Expositor*. It caused a great stir because it openly maligned prominent citizens of the community.

The people were incensed. In coping with the situation the city council met, took evidence, read the law on the subject of nuisances, consulted the charter granted by the legislature to determine their rights and obligations, declared the publication a nuisance, and ordered the mayor, who was Joseph Smith, to abate it.

He in turn issued an order to the city marshall to "destroy the printing press from whence issued the *Nauvoo Expositor* and pi the type of said printing establishment in the street, and burn all the *Expositors* and libelous handbills found in the establishment." The marshall carried out the order and so reported.

Its publishers immediately used this as a pretext for drastic action. Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum were arrested. They were tried and acquitted. But the fire of hatred which had been fanned so long now burst into fury. Rumors flew throughout western Illinois. The Prophet's enemies reached Governor

Thomas Ford with exaggerated stories, and the governor requested that Joseph and Hyrum meet him in Carthage, where feeling against the Smiths was particularly strong. He added: "I will guarantee the safety of all such persons as may be brought to this place from Nauvoo either for trial or as witnesses for the accused."

To this Joseph Smith, sensing the real import of the situation, replied: "We dare not come, though your Excellency promises protection. Yet, at the same time, you have expressed fears that you could not control the mob, in which case we are left to the mercy of the merciless. Sir, we dare not come, for our lives would be in danger, and we are guilty of no crime."

The Prophet knew whereof he spoke. Though he had been arrested and acquitted thirty-seven times, the last entry in his journal, written at this time, reads: "I told Stephen Markham that if Hyrum and I were ever taken again we would be massacred, or I was not a prophet of God."

He thought of escaping to the West, but some of those close to him advised him to go to Carthage and stand trial. To his brother he said, "We shall be butchered." Nevertheless, on the morning of June 24, 1844 the Prophet and several associates set out for Carthage. Pausing near the temple, they looked at the magnificent building and then at the city which only five years previous had been little more than swampland. To the group with him, Joseph said: "This is the loveliest place, and the best people under the heavens; little do they know the trials that await them."

Further on, he made another significant remark: "I am going like a lamb to the slaughter; but I am calm as a summer's morning; I have a conscience void of offense towards God, and towards all men. I shall die innocent, and it shall yet be said of me—he was murdered in cold blood."

Arrived in Carthage, they were arrested on a charge of *treason*! Then they were committed to jail on a false *mittimus*. When the illegality of this action was pointed out, the response was enforcement of the order by an armed body.

Governor Ford was appealed to, but he replied that he "did not think it within the sphere of his duty to interfere, as they were in the hands of the civil law." To the justice of the court he said: "You have the Carthage Greys at your command."

Joseph Smith secured an interview with the governor who promised him that he would be protected from the mobs which by this time had gathered in Carthage. Moreover, the governor assured him that if he, the governor, went to Nauvoo to investigate matters for himself, as Joseph Smith had requested him to do, he would take the Prophet with him.

Notwithstanding these promises, on the morning of June 27, Governor Ford went to Nauvoo, leaving Joseph and Hyrum Smith, and Willard Richards and John Taylor incarcerated in Carthage jail, with a mob militia encamped on the town square.

The day was spent by the prisoners in discussion and the writing of letters. To his wife Joseph wrote: "I am very much resigned to my lot, knowing I am justified, and have done the best that could be done.

Give my love to the children and all who inquire after me. May God bless you all . . . .” The letters were sent with visitors who left at one-thirty in the afternoon.

As the day wore on a feeling of depression came over the group. At the request of the Prophet, John Taylor sang “A Poor Wayfaring Man of Grief,” a song dealing with the Savior, which had been popular in Nauvoo.

A poor, wayfaring man of grief,  
Hath often crossed me on my way  
Who sued so humbly for relief,  
That I could never answer, “Nay.”

I had not power to ask his name  
Whither he went, or whence he came;  
Yet there was something in his eye  
That won my love, I knew not why

Once when my scanty meal was spread  
He entered—not a word he spake!  
Just perishing for want of bread;  
I gave him all; he blessed it, brake.

\* \* \* \*

In prison I saw him next,—condemned  
To meet a traitor’s doom at morn;  
The tide of lying tongues I stemmed,  
And honored him ’mid shame and scorn.

My friendship’s utmost zeal to try  
He asked if I for him would die;  
The flesh was weak, my blood ran chill,  
But the free spirit cried, “I will.”

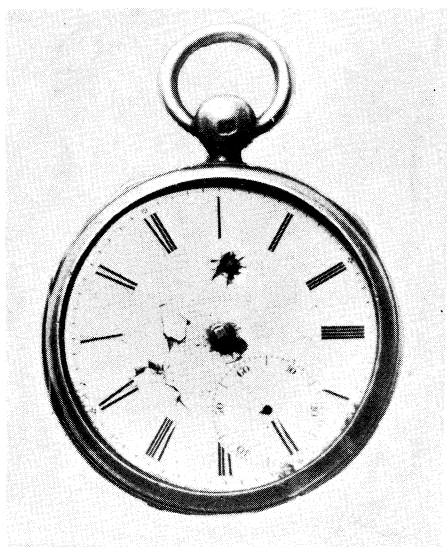


## Carthage Jail

When shot, Joseph Smith fell from the second story window on the side of the building.

## John Taylor's Watch

This stopped the ball which doubtless would have taken his life.





Then in a moment to my view,  
The stranger started from disguise;  
The tokens in his hands I knew;  
The Savior stood before mine eyes.

He spake, and my poor name he named—  
"Of me thou hast not been ashamed;  
These deeds shall thy memorial be;  
Fear not, thou didst them unto me."

When the song was finished, "there was a little rustling at the outer door of the jail, and a cry of surrender, and also a discharge of three or four firearms followed instantly. The Doctor glanced an eye by the curtains of the window, and saw about a hundred armed men around the door. . . . The mob encircled the building, and some of them rushed by the guards up the flight of stairs, burst open the door, and began the work of death."

Hyrum was struck first, and he fell to the floor exclaiming, "I am a dead man." Joseph ran to him, exclaiming, "Oh, dear brother Hyrum." Then John Taylor was hit and he fell to the floor seriously wounded. Fortunately, however, the impact of one ball was broken by the watch in his vest pocket. This saved his life.

With bullets bursting through the door, Joseph sprang to the window. Three balls struck him almost simultaneously, two coming from the door and one from the window. Dying, he fell from the open window, exclaiming, "O Lord, my God!"

Dr. Richards escaped without injury. But the Church had lost its Prophet, and his brother, the Patriarch. The dastardly deed was completed in a matter of seconds. They had sealed their testimonies with their blood.

*SORROW AND HOPE*

When news of the murder of Joseph and Hyrum Smith reached Nauvoo a pall of gloom settled over the city. The next day the bodies of the dead were taken to Nauvoo. Thousands lined the streets as the cortege passed. The brothers were buried on the following day.

Meanwhile, the inhabitants of Carthage had fled from their homes in fear that the Mormons would rise en-masse and wreak vengeance. But there was no disposition to return evil for evil. The Saints were content to leave the murderers in the hands of Him who had said, "Vengeance is mine. I will repay."

The mobocrats had thought that in killing Joseph Smith they had killed Mormonism. But in so doing they had understood neither the character of the people nor the organization of the Church. Joseph had bestowed the keys of authority upon the apostles, with Brigham Young at their head, and the people sustained them in this capacity, although there was some confusion for a time.

Under the leadership of Brigham Young the progress of Nauvoo continued. It became increasingly clear, however, that there would be no peace for the Mormons in Illinois. The blood of the Smiths appeared only to have made the mob bolder. The law had not punished the murderers; the governor had apparently connived with them. Why should they not carry to completion the work of extermination?

When the shock of the murders eased, depredations against property again began. Fields of grain were burned, cattle were driven off, then houses on

the outskirts of the city were destroyed. In the light of these circumstances Brigham Young and other leaders of the Church determined to seek out a place where, as he said, "the devil can't come and dig us out."

Joseph Smith had uttered a remarkable prophecy in 1842, at a time when the Mormons were enjoying peace in Nauvoo. He had said "that the Saints would continue to suffer much affliction and would be driven to the Rocky Mountains. Many would apostatize, others would be put to death by our persecutors, or lose their lives in consequence of exposure and disease, and some of them would live to go to assist in making settlements and build cities and see the the Saints become a mighty people in the midst of the Rocky Mountains."

There, in the vastness of the west, lay their hope for peace. And constantly badgered by threats and mob force, they began preparations in the fall of 1845 to leave their fair city and go forth into the wilderness to find a place where they might worship God according to the dictates of conscience.

## *Exodus*

THE exodus of the Mormons from Nauvoo, Illinois, in February, 1846, stands as one of the epic events in the pioneer history of the United States. In severe winter weather they crossed the Mississippi River, their wagons loaded with the few possessions they could take with them. Behind them were the homes they had constructed from the swamps of Commerce during the seven years they had been permitted to live in Illinois. Before them was the wilderness, largely unknown and uncharted.

Because this march of thousands of homeless people was so like the exodus of the Israelites from their homes in Egypt to a promised land they had not seen, the Mormons named their movement "The Camp of Israel."

Brigham Young and the first company ferried across the river on February 4. A few days later the river froze sufficiently to support teams and wagons. But though this weather proved a boon in expediting the movement, it also brought intense suffering. Of the conditions in which these exiles found themselves, one of their group, Eliza R. Snow, wrote:

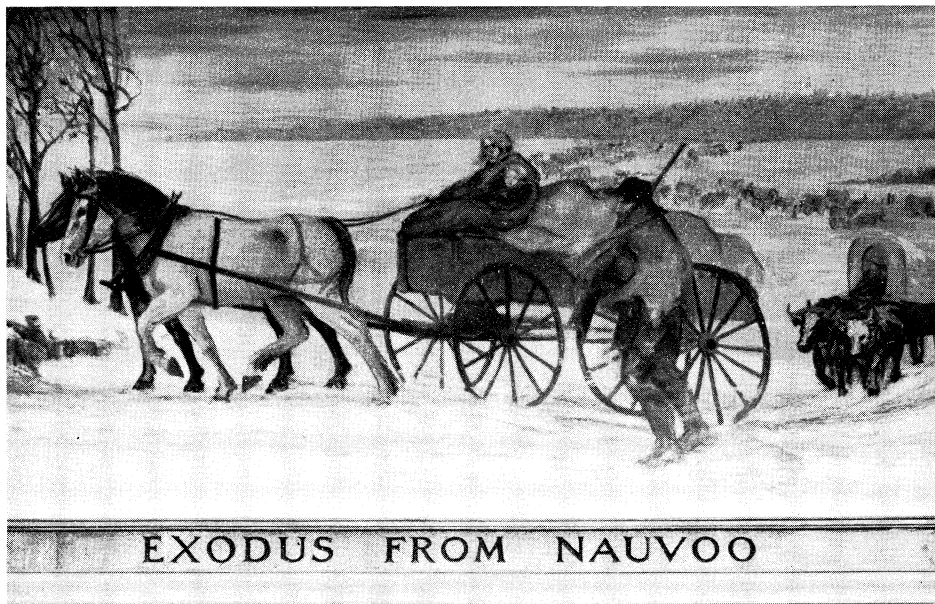
I was informed that on the first night of the encampment nine children were born into the world, and from that time, as we journeyed onward, mothers gave birth to off-spring under almost every variety of circumstances imaginable, except those to which they had been accustomed; some in tents, others in wagons—in rain and in snow storms . . .

Let it be remembered that the mothers of these wilderness-born babes were not savages, accustomed to roam the forest and brave the storm and tempest . . . Most of them were born and educated in the eastern states—had there embraced the gospel as taught by Jesus and his apostles, and, for the sake of their religion had gathered with the Saints, and under trying circumstances had assisted, by their faith, patience and energies, in making Nauvoo what its name indicates, “the beautiful.” There they had lovely homes, decorated with flowers and enriched with choice fruit trees, just beginning to yield plentifully.

To these homes, without lease or sale, they had just bade a final adieu, and with what little of their substance could be packed into one, two, and in some instances, three wagons, had started out, desertward, for—where? To this question the only response at that time was, God knows.

Brigham Young presided over this pilgrim band. They accepted him as prophet and leader, the inspired successor to their beloved Joseph. He, they believed, would direct them to a place of refuge “in the midst

### The Tragic Exodus from Nauvoo



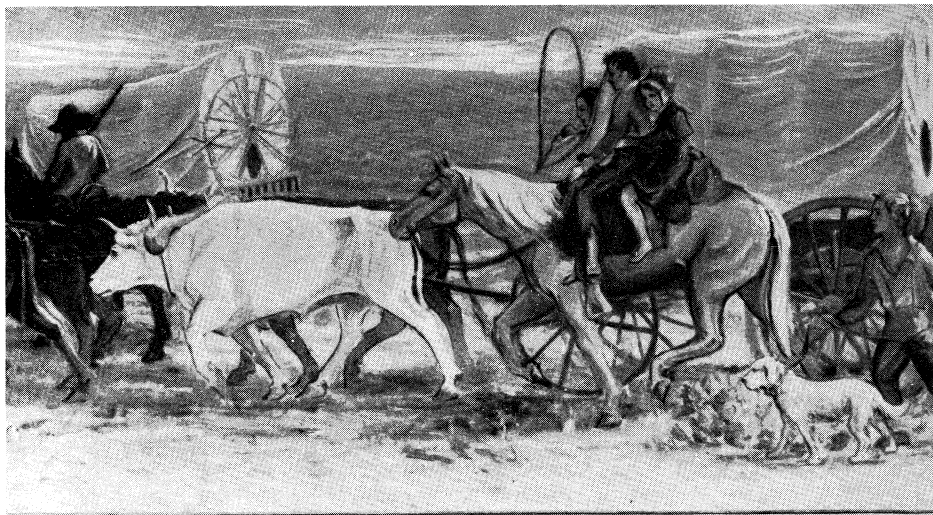
of the Rocky Mountains," where Joseph had predicted they would become "a mighty people."

### *PLANTING FOR OTHER REAPERS*

After the exiles reached the Iowa side of the Mississippi River, they were organized into companies of hundreds, and standards of conduct were set up. The companies were subdivided into fifties and tens, with officers over each group. Brigham Young was sustained as "president over all the camps of Israel."

They traveled in a northwesterly direction, over the territory of Iowa, through a sparsely-settled region between the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers. In the earlier days of the movement snow lay on the ground to a depth of six or eight inches, and their canvas wagon covers offered little protection against cold north winds.

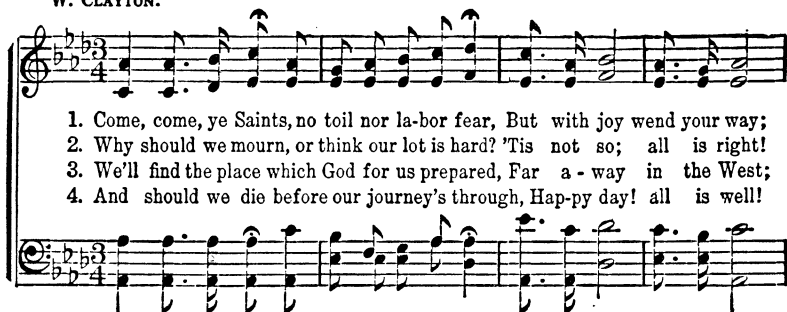
### Westward Across the Prairie



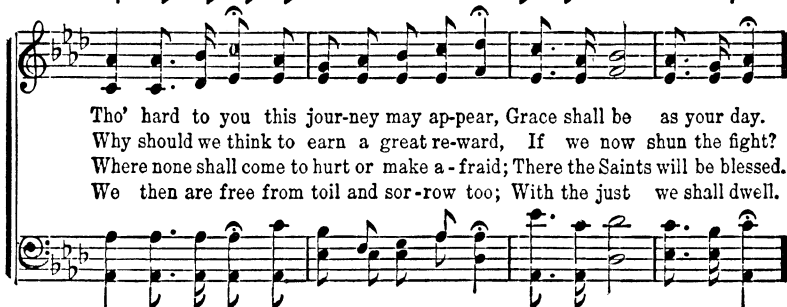
PIONEER TRAIN ON ITS MARCH

# Come, Come, Ye Saints.

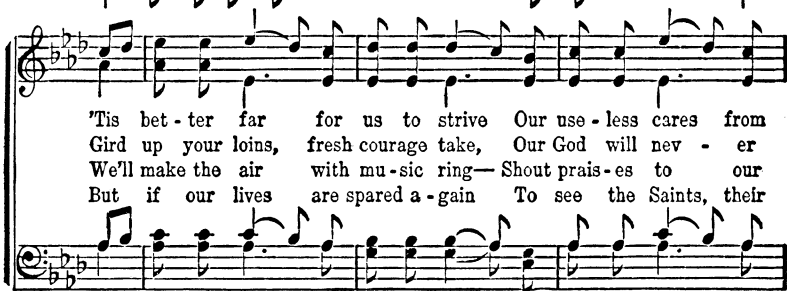
W. CLAYTON.



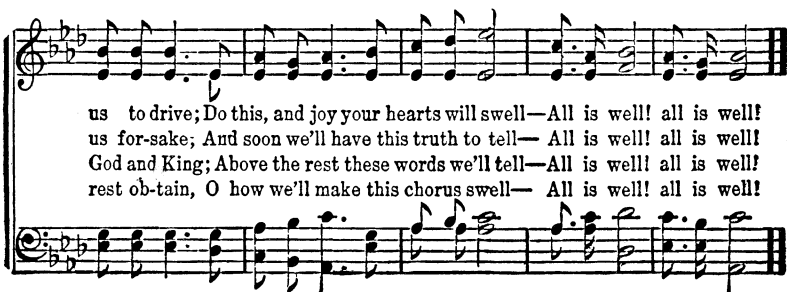
1. Come, come, ye Saints, no toil nor la-bor fear, But with joy wend your way;
2. Why should we mourn, or think our lot is hard? 'Tis not so; all is right!
3. We'll find the place which God for us prepared, Far a - way in the West;
4. And should we die before our journey's through, Hap-py day! all is well!



Tho' hard to you this jour-ney may ap-pear, Grace shall be as your day.  
 Why should we think to earn a great re-ward, If we now shun the fight?  
 Where none shall come to hurt or make a - fraid; There the Saints will be blessed.  
 We then are free from toil and sor-row too; With the just we shall dwell.



'Tis bet - ter far for us to strive Our use - less cares from  
 Gird up your loins, fresh courage take, Our God will nev - er  
 We'll make the air with mu-sic ring— Shout prais-es to our  
 But if our lives are spared a - gain To see the Saints, their



us to drive; Do this, and joy your hearts will swell—All is well! all is well!  
 us for-sake; And soon we'll have this truth to tell— All is well! all is well!  
 God and King; Above the rest these words we'll tell—All is well! all is well!  
 rest ob-tain, O how we'll make this chorus swell— All is well! all is well!

With the coming of spring the snow melted making travel even more difficult. There were no roads in the direction the Saints traveled, and they had to build their own. At times the mud was so deep that three yoke of oxen were required to pull a load of five hundred pounds. Exhausted by a day of pushing and pulling, chopping wood for bridges, loading and unloading wagons, the travelers would find they had moved only a half dozen miles. Slush and rain made their camps veritable quagmires. Exposure to such conditions, together with improper nourishment, took a heavy toll of life.

Burials along the way were frequent. Crude coffins were fashioned from cottonwood trees, brief services were held, and the loved ones of the deceased turned their faces and their teams westward, realizing they would never pass this way again. One wonders why these people did not become bitter and vindictive, particularly when they remembered their comfortable homes now ravaged and burned by the Illinois mob.

But they lightened their sorrows with self-made pleasures. They had their own brass band, and they made good use of it. The settlers of Iowa were amazed to see these pioneers clear a piece of land about their camp fires, and then dance and sing until the bugler sounded taps.

It was while traveling under these circumstances that one of their number, William Clayton, composed that epic hymn of the prairie, "Come, Come Ye Saints." Set to an old English air, this song became an anthem of hope and faith for all the thou-



sands of Mormon pioneers. Nothing, perhaps, expresses so well the spirit of this movement.

When food became scarce, they found it necessary to trade precious possessions—dishes, silverware, lace—brought from the East or across the sea, for a little corn and salt pork. In this way the homes of many Iowa settlers were made more attractive and the Mormons were able to replenish their scant food supplies. Occasionally the brass band traveled out of its way a considerable distance to give a concert in a frontier settlement in order to add to the commissary.

One of the remarkable features of this movement was the building of temporary settlements along the way. The pioneer company occasionally stopped long enough to clear, fence, plow and plant large sections of ground. The leader called for volunteers—some to split rails for fences and bridges, others to remove trees, and others to plow and sow. A few cabins were built, and several families were detailed to remain and care for the crops. Then the pioneer company moved forward, leaving the crops for later companies to harvest.

This spirit of mutual service and cooperation characterized the entire movement. Without this the migration of twenty thousand people through the wilderness doubtless would have ended in disaster.

Approximately three and a half months after leaving Sugar Creek, their camp on the west shore of the Mississippi, the pioneer company reached Council Bluffs on the Missouri. Following them, across the entire territory of Iowa, was a slow-moving train of hundreds of wagons. They were to continue to filter out of Nauvoo and move over the rolling



Crossing the Missouri River

Iowa hills for all of that summer and late into the year. Here was modern Israel, seeking a new promised land!

### *THE MORMON BATTALION*

On a June morning in 1846 the Mormons at one of the temporary camps along the trail were surprised by the approach of a platoon of United States soldiers. Captain James Allen had come with a call for five hundred able young men to fight in the war with Mexico.

He was directed on to Council Bluffs to see Brigham Young and the other authorities of the Church. It is not surprising that the leaders remarked on the irony of the situation—their country, which had stood by while they, its citizens, had been dispossessed of their homes by unconstitutional mobs, now called upon them for military volunteers.

It is true that the Mormons had petitioned the government for assistance in the form of contracts to build blockhouses along the westward trail. They believed that this would be a great service to the thousands of emigrants, Mormon and non-Mormon, who would move west in the years to come. Such blockhouses would afford protection against the Indians and other dangers of the prairie. But a military call for five hundred urgently needed men was hardly the answer they expected. Moreover, the call was highly disproportionate in terms of their numbers.

Nevertheless, they responded. Brigham Young and others went from camp to camp, hoisting the national flag at each recruiting place. And though this meant leaving families fatherless on the plains,

the men enlisted when President Young assured them that their families should have food so long as his own had any.

Captain Allen expressed amazement at the music and dancing on the eve of departure. The recruits were to go to Mexico. Their families, now of necessity, would be compelled to establish winter quarters and wait until the following year to go to the Rocky Mountains. When or where they would meet again was an open question. Perhaps it was a prophetic statement from Brigham Young that eased the sorrow of departure. He promised the men that if they would keep the commandments of God, not one of them should die in battle.

From Council Bluffs they marched to Fort Leavenworth. There they received advanced pay for clothing, and a large part of this money they sent back for the relief of their families.

From Leavenworth they marched southwest to the old Spanish town of Santa Fe. Here they were saluted by the garrison under the command of Colonel Alexander W. Doniphan, the man who had saved Joseph Smith's life in Missouri.

From Santa Fe they marched south down the valley of the Rio Grande, but before reaching El Paso they turned to the west, following the San Pedro River.

They then crossed the Gila River, marched to Tucson, followed the Gila to the Colorado, and made their way over the mountains to San Diego, California. Much of the road they made was later followed by the Southern Pacific Railroad.

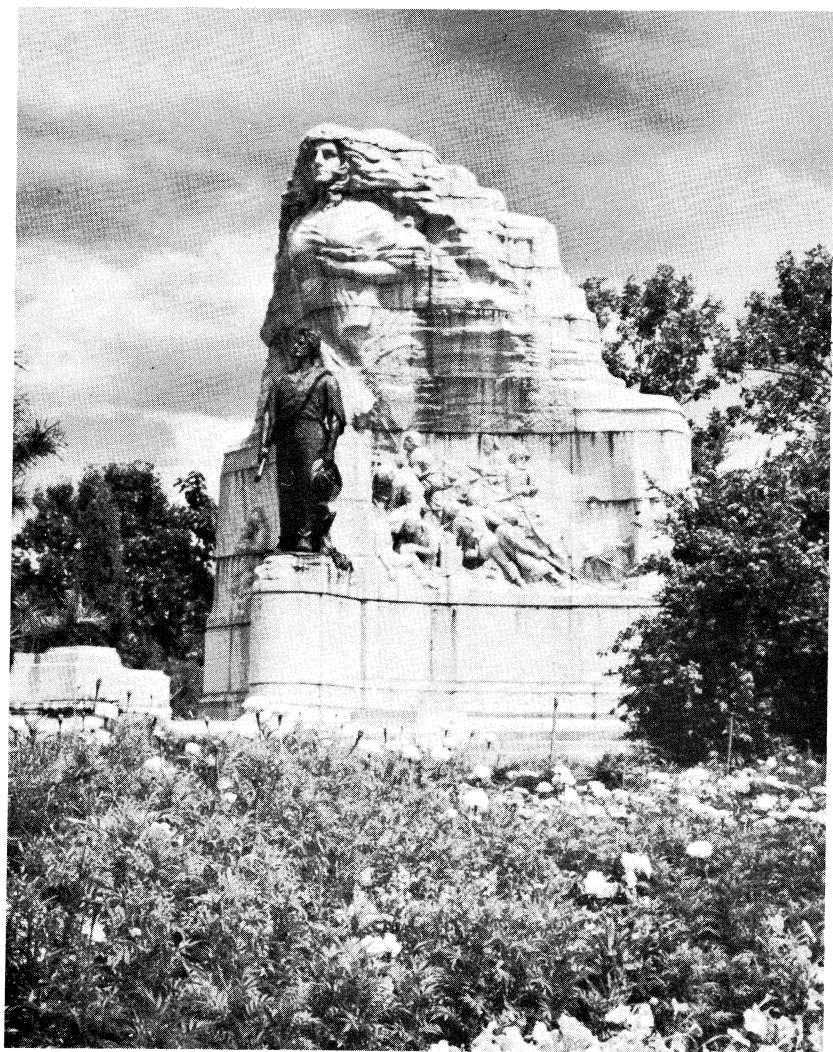
The story of their historic march is one of suffering from insufficient rations, of killing thirst and desperate attempts to secure water, of exhausting travel through heavy desert sand, and of cutting a road over forbidding mountains. They had left their families in June of 1846. They reached San Diego, January 29, 1847. The war was over when they reached their post, and they were not obliged to do any fighting. Brigham Young's prophetic promise had been fulfilled.

Upon reaching the Pacific Coast their commander, Colonel Philip St. George Cooke of the United States Army, congratulated them with a citation, reading in part as follows:

The lieutenant colonel commanding, congratulates the battalion on their safe arrival on the shore of the Pacific Ocean, and the conclusion of their march of over two thousand miles.

History may be searched in vain for an equal march of infantry. Half of it has been through a wilderness, where nothing but savages and wild beasts are found, or deserts where, for want of water, there is no living creature. There, with almost hopeless labor, we have dug deep wells, which the future traveler will enjoy. Without a guide who had traversed them we have ventured into trackless tablelands where water was not found for several marches. With crowbar and pick and axe in hand, we have worked our way over mountains, which seemed to defy aught save the wild goat, and hewed a pass through a chasm of living rock more narrow than our wagons.

But while the members of the Battalion had been serving under their country's flag, those of their people who had remained in Nauvoo were being driven by mobs in defiance of every constitutional guarantee.



### Mormon Battalion Monument

This beautiful memorial, standing on the State Capitol grounds in Salt Lake City, was erected by the people of Utah in remembrance of their loyal forebears who marched from Council Bluffs to San Diego, and then made their way back across the mountains to the Salt Lake Valley

*THE FALL OF A CITY*

Although most of the Mormons had succeeded in getting out of Nauvoo before May 1, 1846, the date set by the mob for their complete departure, some of their number had not been so fortunate. By August there remained about one thousand, many among them being sick and aged. It was thought that the mob would spare these, at least.

But history bears somber witness of the fact that those who had indulged in such wishful thinking were sadly mistaken.

When it became apparent that the mob would not wait, the people of Nauvoo appealed to the governor for aid. He responded by sending a Major Parker with *ten men* representing the military of the state of Illinois. Major Parker was later succeeded by a Major Clifford.

The mob answered the Major's appeals for peaceful settlement of the difficulty by attacking him and the Mormons who had volunteered to serve under him. Though greatly outnumbered, the defenders of the city fashioned five old steamboat shafts into cannons and constructed improvised breastworks. In the name of the people of Illinois, Major Clifford requested the mobbers to disperse.

Their answer was an assault on the city. The defenders were able to hold them off for a period, but they were so seriously outnumbered that the Mormons agreed to evacuate the city as quickly as they could gather together a few of their possessions.

Even this did not satisfy the mob. While the Mormons were leaving, they were set upon and abused, and their wagons were ransacked for anything of value. Crossing to the Iowa side of the river, they set up a temporary camp. Colonel Thomas L. Kane of Philadelphia, who chanced to see them at this time, later described their situation before the Historical Society of Pennsylvania:

Dreadful, indeed, was the suffering of these forsaken beings; bowed and cramped by cold and sunburn, alternating as each weary day and night dragged on, they were, almost all of them, the crippled victims of disease. They were there because they had no homes, nor hospital, nor poorhouse, nor friends to offer them any. They could not satisfy the feeble cravings of their sick, they had not bread to quiet the hunger-cries of their children . . . .

These were Mormons, famishing in Lee County, Iowa, in the fourth week of the month of September, in the year of our Lord, 1846. The city [which he had just visited] — it was Nauvoo, Illinois. The Mormons were the owners of that city, and the smiling country around. And those who had stopped their ploughs, who had silenced their hammers, their axes, their shuttles, and their workshop wheels; those who had put out their fires, who had eaten their food, spoiled their orchards, and trampled under foot their thousands of acres of unharvested bread; these were the keepers of their dwellings, the carousers in their temple, whose drunken riot insulted the ears of their dying.

Doubtless many would have starved, but for thousands of quail which flew into their camp, and which they were able to catch with their hands. These they regarded as manna from heaven, an answer to prayer.

Fortunately, they were not left in this condition for long. Their brethren, who had gone on ahead,



sent back relief wagons and divided with them their own meager stores. Their last picture of Nauvoo, as they tediously made their way over the Iowa hills, was of the tower of their sacred temple, now spoiled and desecrated.

## *To The Promised Land*

IT WAS apparent to Brigham Young and the other leaders of the Church that it would be unwise to attempt to reach the Rocky Mountains in the year 1846, since the expedition would have been greatly weakened by the loss of the young men who had marched with the Mormon Battalion. Accordingly, a temporary settlement was established on the Missouri.

The site, adjoining the present city of Omaha, soon had more of the appearance of a town than a camp. Many of the people got along with dugouts and other crude shelters. However, a thousand sturdy log houses were erected before January, 1847.

During all of that winter feverish activity went on. Anvils rang with the making and repairing of wagons. Available maps and reports were carefully studied, and every preparation possible was undertaken to insure the success of the move scheduled for the following spring.

The community was not without its pleasures, although comforts were few. Dances were frequently held under the sponsorship of the various quorums of the Priesthood. Religious worship was carried on as though the people were permanently settled. Schools for the children were successfully conducted, for the education of the young has always been of prime importance in Mormon philosophy.

But often a pupil—sometimes several—did not appear when the school bell rang. A type of scurvy,



### "The Tragedy of Winter Quarters"

In this representation of a grief-stricken mother and father burying their child in a prairie grave, Avard Fairbanks has portrayed the pathos of a scene familiar to the Pioneers. This monument stands in the old Mormon cemetery at Winter Quarters [now a part of Omaha], where were buried six hundred of the six thousand who died between Nauvoo and Salt Lake City.

called black canker, took a sorrowful toll. Lack of proper nourishment, insufficient shelter, extremes of temperature in the lowlands along the river—these made the people easy victims of disease.

In recent years the Church has erected a monument in the old cemetery of Winter Quarters. In heroic size it depicts a mother and father laying a child in a grave they knew they would never again visit. Surrounding the monument are the graves of some six hundred of those who died at this temporary encampment on the prairie.

## WESTWARD

When water began to run and grass to grow in the early spring of 1847, plans were completed for the sending of a pioneer company to the Rocky Mountains. Their responsibility was to chart a route and find "a place" for the thousands who would follow.

On January 14 President Young delivered to the Saints what he declared to be a revelation from the Lord. This became the constitution governing their westward movement. It is an interesting document, reading in part as follows:

The word and will of the Lord concerning the Camp of Israel in their journeyings to the West.

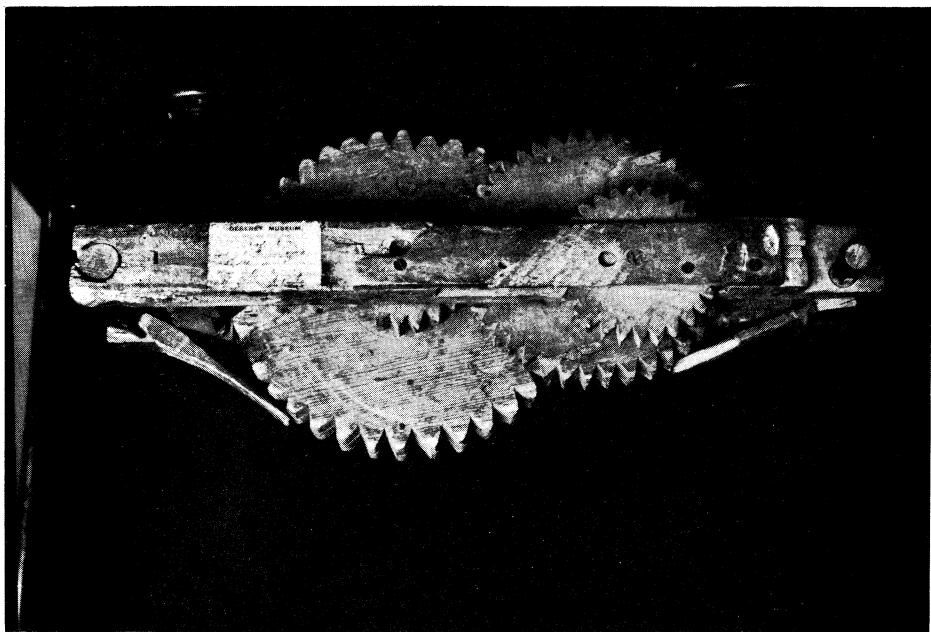
Let all of the people of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and those who journey with them, be organized into companies, with a covenant and promise to keep all the commandments and statutes of the Lord our God.

Let all the companies be organized with captains of hundreds, captains of fifties, and captains of tens, with a president



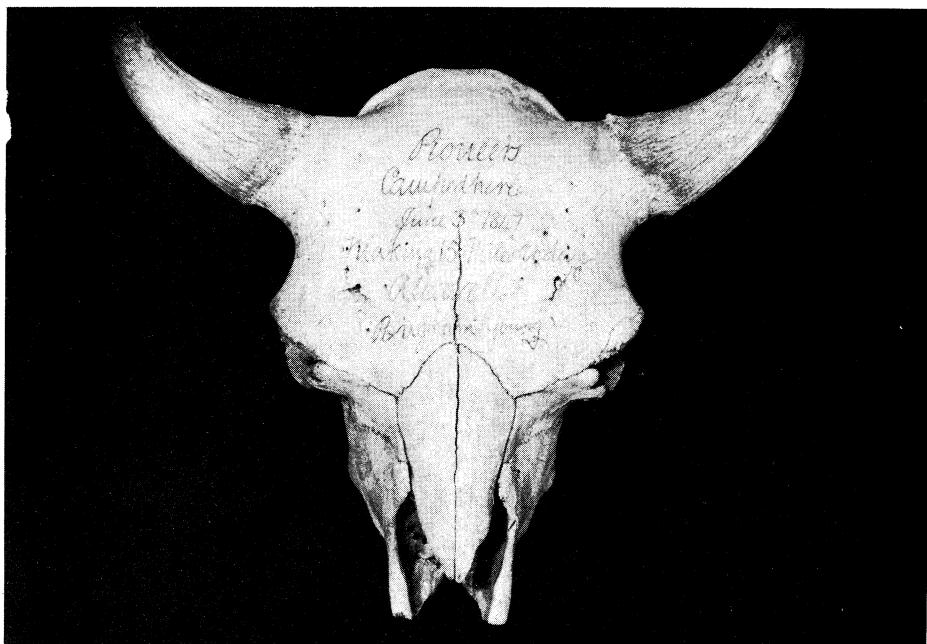
### Brigham Young

He was a man of forty-five when he led the Pioneers westward.  
This photograph was taken five years later.



Odometer to Measure Distance

Bulletin of the Plains



and his two counselors at their head, under the direction of the Twelve Apostles. And this shall be our covenant, that we will walk in all the ordinances of the Lord.

And if any man shall seek to build up himself, and seeketh not my counsel, he shall have no power and his folly shall be made manifest.

Seek ye and keep all your pledges one with another, and covet not which is thy brother's.

Keep yourself from evil to take the name of the Lord in vain . . .

Cease to contend one with another, cease to speak evil one of another.

Cease drunkenness, and let your words tend to edifying one another.

If thou borrowest of thy neighbor, thou shalt return that which thou hast borrowed; and if thou canst not return, then go straightway and tell thy neighbor, lest he condemn thee.

If thou shalt find that which thy neighbor hast lost, thou shalt make diligent search till thou shalt deliver it to him again.

Thou shalt be diligent in preserving that which thou hast, that thou mayest be a wise steward; for it is the free gift of the Lord thy God, and thou art his steward.

If thou art merry, praise the Lord with singing, with music, with dancing, and with a prayer of praise and thanksgiving.

If thou art sorrowful, call on the Lord thy God with supplication, that your souls may be joyful.

Fear not thine enemies, for they are in mine hands, and I will do my pleasure with them.

To these general standards of conduct were added other specific rules. Every man was to carry a loaded gun or have one in his wagon where, in case of attack, he could get it at a moment's notice. At night the wagons were to be drawn in a circle to form a corral for the teams. There was to be no travel nor work on the Sabbath; both teams and men should rest on that day. Prayer, night and morning, should be a regular practice in the camp.

On April 5 the pioneer company started west. It consisted of 143 men, three women, and two children, with Brigham Young leading the group. Fortunately, when they had gone only a short distance, Apostles Parley P. Pratt and John Taylor arrived at Winter Quarters from England. They brought with them barometers, sextants, telescopes and other instruments. In the hands of Orson Pratt, an accomplished scientist, these made it possible for the pioneers to determine the latitude, longitude, temperature, and elevation above sea level of their position each day. Such information was invaluable in the preparation of a guide for those who were to come later.

One of the famous trails of history already existed along the south side of the Platte River. It was to become more heavily traveled in years to come by thousands of emigrants bound for Oregon and California. However, Brigham Young determined against using the Oregon road, and concluded to break a new trail on the north side of the river. In so doing, he said, the Mormons would avoid conflict with other westward-bound people, and would also insure more feed for the cattle of the companies to follow. It is interesting to note that when the Union Pacific Railroad was built some years later, it followed this Mormon road for a very considerable distance.

In 1847 great herds of buffalo roamed the plains. It was customary practice among westward-bound emigrants to shoot them simply for sport. But Brigham Young took a different attitude. He advised his people to kill no more than were needed for meat.



*A LOG OF THE JOURNEY*

The pioneers were interested in knowing the number of miles they covered each day. The first device employed to determine this was a red cloth tied to a wagon wheel. By counting the revolutions of the wheel and multiplying this number by the circumference of the rim, it was possible to accurately determine the distance traveled. But watching the revolutions of a wheel day in and day out, soon became tedious. There was need for a better way.

Appleton Harmon solved the problem. Carving a set of wooden gears, he constructed what was called a roadometer or odometer. It was a novel device, the forerunner of the mileage meter of our modern speedometer. And though constructed of wood, it was amazingly accurate.

For the guidance of those who should follow, the pioneer company left letters of direction, mileage, and conditions of the trail. These were tucked in an improvised mail box or were painted on a sun-bleached buffalo skull.

Journals were carefully kept, containing notes of many details. An excerpt or two from Orson Pratt's journal will serve to illustrate this:

*Saturday, May 22.*—At a quarter past five this morning the thermometer stood at 48.5 degrees. There was a light breeze from the south, the sky being partially overspread with thin clouds.

. . . Five and a half miles from our morning encampment we crossed a stream, which we named Crab Creek;  $1\frac{3}{4}$  miles further we halted for noon. A meridian observation of the sun placed us in latitude  $41^{\circ} 30' 3''$ . With our glasses Chimney Rock can now be seen at a distance of 42 miles up the river. At this distance it appears like a short tower placed upon an

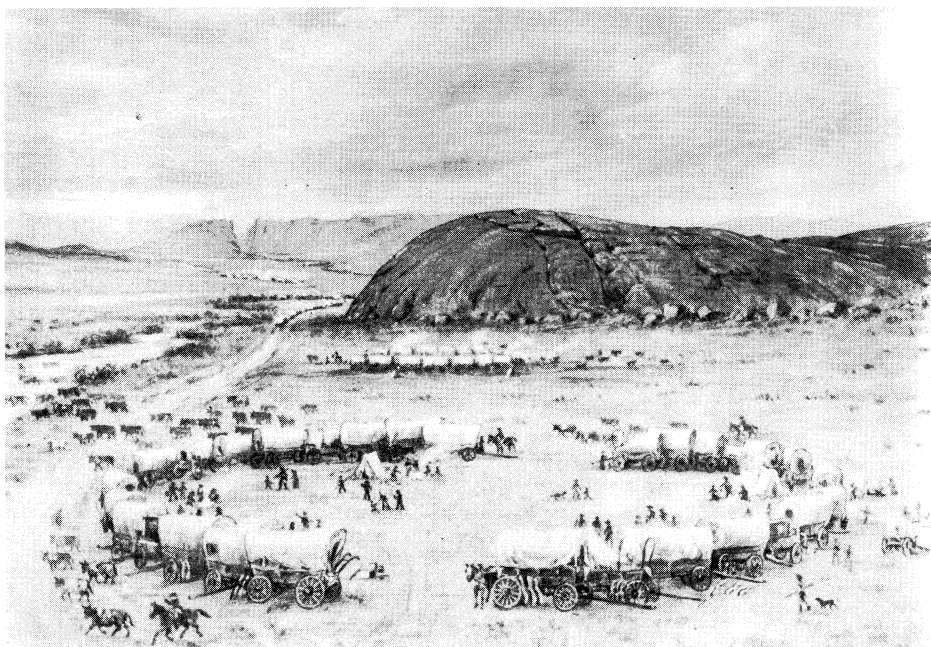
elevated mound or hill. Four and a quarter miles further brought us to another place where the river strikes the bluffs; as usual we were obliged to pass over them and in about  $2\frac{1}{4}$  miles we again came to the prairie bottoms, and driving a short distance we encamped, having made  $15\frac{1}{2}$  miles during the day. For a number of miles past, the formation, more particularly that of the bluffs, has been gradually changing from sand to marl and soft earthy limestone, the nature of which is beginning to change the face of the country, presenting scenes of remarkable picturesque beauty . . . .

*Sunday, May 23.* — Today, as usual, we let ourselves and teams rest. . . . Several of us again visited the tops of some of these bluffs, and by barometrical measurement I ascertained the height of one of them to be 235 feet above the river, and 3,590 feet above the level of the sea. . . . Rattlesnakes are very plentiful here. . . . Soon after dinner we attended public worship, when the people were very interestingly and intelligently addressed by Erastus Snow, Brigham Young and others.

The route of the pioneers lay up the valley of the Platte to the confluence of the North Platte and South Platte Rivers. They then followed the North Platte through what is now Nebraska and Wyoming to a point where the Sweetwater River flows into the North Platte. Their route then lay along this stream to its headwaters near South Pass.

By June 1 the company had reached old Fort Laramie, where they were surprised to find a group of Church members from Mississippi who had come from the south by way of Pueblo, Colorado with the purpose of joining the pioneer company and following them to their destination.

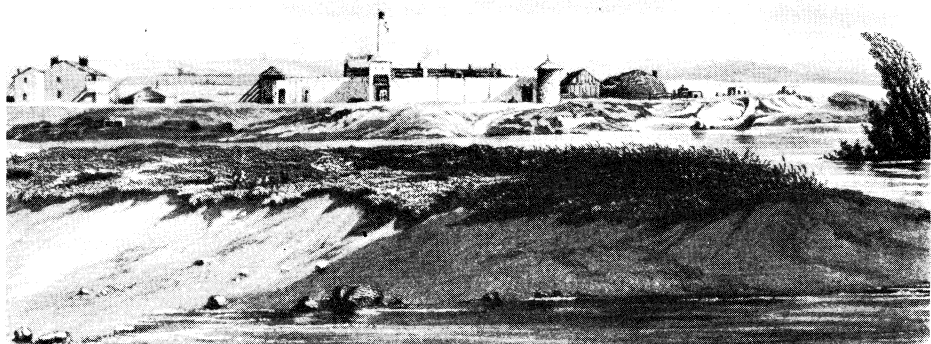
On June 6 they moved over South Pass, that place where the Rockies gently slope to the prairie, and over which moved most of the westward-bound emigrants. At South Pass the Mormons met Major

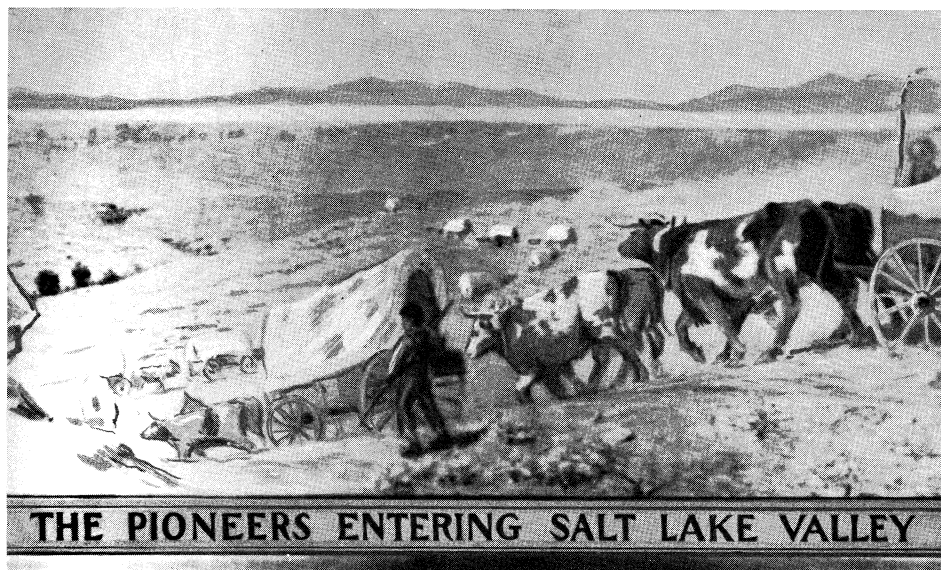


### Pioneer Encampment at Independence Rock

With camera and brush William H. Jackson has vividly portrayed America's westward migration.

Historic Fort Laramie





Entering the Salt Lake Valley

The Lone Tree  
that stood in  
the Valley in  
1847



Moses Harris, a famous trapper and scout. From him they received a description of the basin of the Salt Lake. However, his report of the country was unfavorable. Of this interview Orson Pratt writes: "From his description, which is very discouraging, we have little hope for even a moderate good country anywhere in these regions. He speaks of the whole region as being sandy and destitute of timber and vegetation, except sage brush."

On June 28, they met that wiry veteran of the west, Jim Bridger. Anxious to learn all they could of the country toward which they were traveling, the Mormons accepted his suggestion that they make camp and spend the night with him. He indicated that some good country could be found both to the north and the south of the basin of Salt Lake, but discouraged any plan for establishing a large colony in the basin itself.

On June 30, Samuel Brannan rode into view. He was a member of the Church, and on February 4, 1846, the date of the first exodus from Nauvoo, he and more than two hundred Mormons had sailed from New York to California by way of Cape Horn. Landing at Yerba Buena, now San Francisco, he had established the first English language newspaper published there. Leaving California in April, he had ridden east over the mountains to meet Brigham Young. Enroute he had passed the scene of the Donner Party tragedy of the preceding winter, and gave the Mormons a description of that ill-fated camp in which more than a score of people starved to death in the snows of the Sierras. Brannan enthusiastically described for President Young the beauties of Cali-

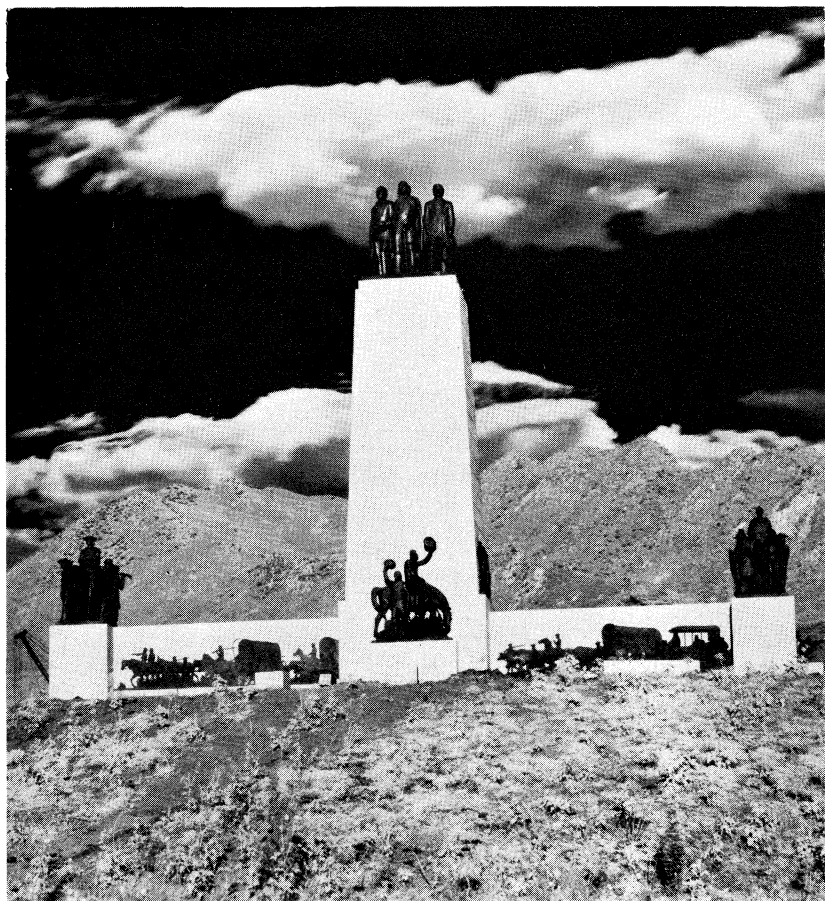
fornia. It was, he indicated, a rich and productive land of great beauty and equable climate. There the Mormons could prosper. But President Young could not be dissuaded from the purpose to which he had set himself—God had a place for His people and there they would go to work out their destiny.

### *"THIS IS THE PLACE"*

As the pioneer company approached the mountains, travel became more difficult. Their teams were jaded and their wagons were worn. Moreover, the steep mountain canyons, with their swift streams, huge boulders, and heavy tree growth presented problems very different from those experienced on the plains.

On July 21 Orson Pratt and Erastus Snow, two advance scouts, entered the Salt Lake Valley. Three days later Brigham Young, who had moved more slowly because of illness, rode out of the canyon and looked across the valley. He paused, and with a prophetic gesture announced, "This is the place."

This was the promised land. This valley with its salty lake gleaming in the July sun. This treeless prairie in the mountains. This tract of dry land broken only by a few bubbling streams running from the canyons to the lake. This was the object of vision and of prophecy, the land of which thousands yet at Winter Quarters dreamed. This was their land of refuge, the place where the Saints would "become a mighty people in the midst of the Rocky Mountains."



### "This is the Place" Monument

Erected in tribute to the Pioneers of Utah, this imposing monument was dedicated July 24, 1947, one hundred years from the day Brigham Young looked over the Salt Lake Valley and proclaimed, "This is the place, drive on."

## *Pioneering The Wilderness*

TWO hours after the arrival of the main body of pioneers the first plowing in the Salt Lake Valley was undertaken. But the ground was so dry and hard that the plows were broken. Then one of the canyon streams was diverted, the soil was soaked, and the plowing thereafter was easier. On July 24 potatoes were planted and the ground watered. This was the beginning of irrigation by Anglo-Saxon people. In fact, it marked the beginning of modern irrigation practice.

Other seed was also planted. There was small chance that a crop of any consequence might mature, but it was hoped that at least enough to reproduce the seed would develop, and thus they would have seed for the following spring.

Brigham Young arrived on Saturday. On the following day the people met for worship, and in addition they received a statement of the policies that were to prevail in the new colony. President Young declared:

No work shall be done on Sunday. If you do, you will lose five times as much as you will gain. None must hunt on that day. . . . No man who has come here should try to buy land, as there is none for sale. But every man shall have his land measured out to him for city and farming purposes. He may till it as he pleases, but he must be industrious and take care of it. There is to be no private ownership of streams of water; and wood and timber shall be regarded as common property. Also, I wish to advise you to use only the dead timber for fuel, in order to save the live timber for future use. Walk faithfully in the light of these laws and you will be a prosperous people.



*THE FIRST WINTER*

The next day everyone was busy exploring the surrounding country to learn of its resources. Though their faith was strong and their hopes high, the situation in which these people found themselves could hardly be called encouraging. They were a small group with scant provisions, located a thousand miles from the nearest settlement to the east and seven hundred miles from the Pacific Coast. They were unfamiliar with the resources of this strange new land, which was untried and different in its nature from that which they had left.

Yet they began preparations for an extensive city. Marking a site in the desert soil, Brigham Young proclaimed, "Here we will build a temple to our God." The city was then platted around this, with streets 132 feet wide. Such width was considered entirely unnecessary in those days, but the foresight in this action has become evident with modern traffic. The projected community was named Great Salt Lake City.

One thing that caught the fancy of the pioneers as they explored the valley was the similarity between this new-found Zion and the Holy Land. Twenty-five miles south of their camp site was a beautiful fresh water lake with a river running from this to another Dead Sea. They named the river Jordan.

Once policies and plans had been decided upon, Brigham Young and others began the long journey back to Winter Quarters. Those remaining in the valley immediately commenced construction of a fort

in which to house themselves as well as the large company expected later in the summer. Most of the families spent the first winter in the fort, although there were a few who ventured to build homes of their own.

Fortunately, that first winter was unusually mild. Nevertheless the colonists suffered. Food was poor and scarce, and the clothing situation was worse. Sego roots were dug and thistle tops were boiled for food. In remembrance of the part it played in sustaining life the sego lily is today Utah's state flower.

No time was wasted in preparing for the future. All through the winter the task of fencing and clearing the land progressed. A common field of five thousand acres was plowed and planted. Considering the tools which these people had, this was a tremendous accomplishment.

### *THE COMING OF THE GULLS*

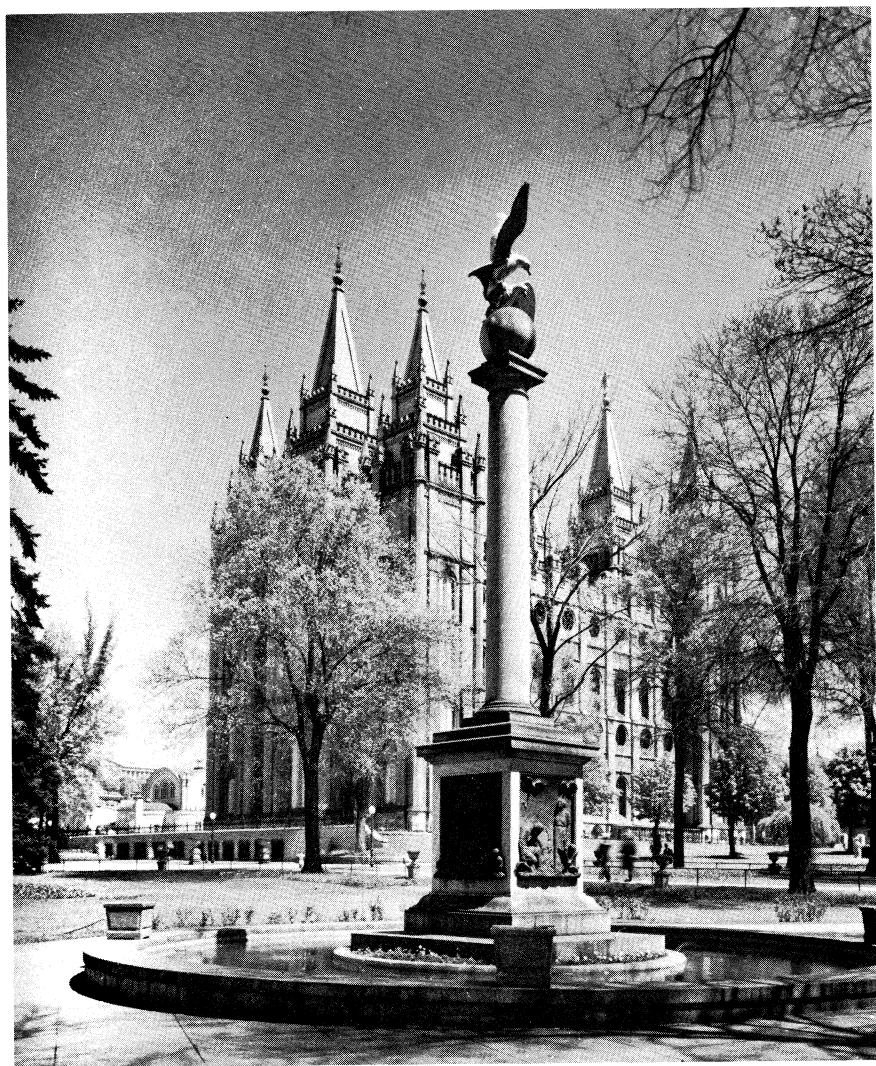
In the spring wide fields of green grain appeared to be ample reward for the labors of the previous fall and winter. Now, these people thought, there would be plenty to eat, both for themselves and for the large number of immigrants expected that summer. Under irrigation the crops flourished and the future looked bright.

Then one day it was noticed that large crickets were eating the grain. These crickets had been seen by the first men to enter the valley, and the newcomers had noted that some of the natives used them for food. But they had expected nothing of this



## The Coming of the Gulls

Bas-relief on the Seagull Monument



Seagull Monument, Temple Square, Salt Lake City  
"Erected in grateful remembrance of the mercy of God to the  
Mormon Pioneers."

kind. Each day the situation grew worse. The insects came in myriads, devouring everything before them.

Terror struck into the hearts of the people as they saw their grain fall before this foe. With all their strength they fought them. They tried burning and drowning. They tried beating them with shovels and brooms. They tried every means they could devise to stem the tide. Still they came, eating every stalk of green before them.

Exhausted and in desperation the Saints turned to the Lord, pleading in prayer for preservation of bread for their children.

Then to their amazement they saw great flocks of white-winged sea gulls which flew from over the lake to the west and settled on the fields. At first the people thought this was a new foe coming to scourge them. But the gulls went after the crickets, devouring them, then flying away and disgorging only to return for more.

The crops of 1848 were saved, and on Temple Square in Salt Lake City stands a monument to the sea gull. In bronze it bears the inscription, "Erected in grateful remembrance of the mercy of God to the Mormon Pioneers."

### *GOLD IN CALIFORNIA*

Brigham Young arrived at Winter Quarters on October 31, 1847. On the following December 5 he was sustained as President of the Church. From the time of Joseph Smith's death, Brigham had led the Church in his capacity as President of the Council

of Twelve Apostles. He named as his counselors Heber C. Kimball who had come into the Church with him, and Dr. Willard Richards.

On May 26, 1848 he left Winter Quarters, never again to return to the East. While he now knew the way, this second journey was more difficult than had been the pioneer trip. The company of which he was leader "included 397 wagons with 1229 souls, 74 horses, 19 mules, 1275 oxen, 699 cows, 184 cattle, 411 sheep, 141 pigs, 605 chickens, 37 cats, 82 dogs, 3 goats, 10 geese, 2 beehives, 8 doves and 1 crow." It was no small task to shepherd such a caravan over a thousand miles of prairie and mountains.

They reached the valley on October 20, 116 days after their departure from Winter Quarters. Meanwhile, something had happened in California which had set a fire in the hearts of the adventurous the world over and which was to have its effect on the Mormons. Gold had been discovered.

After the Mormon Battalion had been mustered out in California, some of the Battalion men stopped at Sutter's Fort in the Sacramento Valley to work and earn a little money before crossing the mountains to rejoin their families. Six of them, with Sutter's foreman, James W. Marshall, and some Indians, undertook the construction of a sawmill on the south fork of the American River. There, on January 24, 1848, Marshall picked up some gold out of the sand in the mill race. Henry Bigler, one of the Battalion men, wrote in his journal that night: "This day some kind of metal was found in the tail race that looks like gold."

That historic entry is the only original docu-

mentation of the discovery that sent men rushing over land and sea to California.

But while others were rushing to the American River, the Battalion men completed their contract with Sutter, gathered together what possessions they had, and made their way east over the mountains to the semi-arid valley of Great Salt Lake, there to undertake with their friends the painful labor of subduing the wilderness.

Meanwhile, the gold fever had infested some of those in the valley who had just passed through a difficult winter. Speaking of this Brigham Young said:

Some have asked me about going. I told them that God appointed this place for the gathering of his saints, and you will do better right here than you will by going to the gold mines. . . . Those who stop here and are faithful to God and his people will make more money and get richer than you that run after the god of this world; and I promise you in the name of the Lord that many of you that go thinking you will get rich and come back, will wish you had never gone away from here, and will long to come back, but will not be able to do so. Some of you will come back, but your friends who remain here will have to help you; and the rest of you who are spared to return will not make as much money as your brethren do who stay here and help build up the Church and Kingdom of God; they will prosper and be able to buy you twice over. Here is the place God has appointed for his people.

. . . As the Saints gather here and get strong enough to possess the land, God will temper the climate, and we shall build a city and a temple to the Most High God in this place. We will extend our cities and our settlements to the east and the west, to the north and to the south, and we will build towns and cities by the hundreds, and thousands of the Saints will gather from the nations of the earth. This will become the great highway of the nations. Kings and emperors and the noble and wise of the earth will visit us here, while the wicked and ungodly will envy us our comfortable homes and possessions. Take

courage, brethren. . . . Plow your land and sow wheat, plant your potatoes. . . . The worst fear that I have about this people is that they will get rich in this country, forget God and his people, wax fat, and kick themselves out of the Church and go to hell. This people will stand mobbing, robbing, poverty, and all manner of persecution, and be true. But my greater fear for them is that they cannot stand wealth; and yet they have to be tried with riches, for they will become the richest people on this earth.

Before the close of the year 1848 the population of the valley had reached five thousand. A heavy influx of emigrants seriously taxed the resources of the community. Hunger and hardship were common that winter, and these circumstances added to the discouragement of many. In the midst of these trying conditions Heber C. Kimball, speaking before the people in one of their meetings, prophesied that in less than one year there would be plenty of clothing and other needed articles sold on the streets of Salt Lake City for less than in New York or St. Louis.

Such a situation was incredible, but Brigham Young said of the statement, "Let it stand." The fulfillment of that prophecy came about in remarkable fashion.

Thinking to get rich with the sale of goods in California, eastern merchants had loaded great wagon trains with clothing, tools, and other items for which there would be demand at the gold diggings. But on reaching Salt Lake City they learned that competitors had beaten them by shipping around the Cape.

Their only interest then was to unload what they had for what price they could get, and go on to California as quickly as possible. Auctions were held



from their wagons on the streets of Salt Lake City. Cloth and clothing sold for less than they could be bought for in New York. Badly needed tools could be had for less than in St. Louis. Fine teams, jaded from the long journey, were eagerly traded for the fatter but less valuable stock of the Mormons. Good, heavy wagons, in great demand in the mountain colony, were traded for lighter vehicles with which the gold seekers could make better time.

### *GLAD TIDINGS TO THE WORLD*

While eager men were traveling over land and sea to search for gold, the Mormons also sent eager men out over land and sea—in search of souls. Missionaries were sent to the Eastern States, to Canada and to the British Isles. In spite of shocking prejudices, which moved before them, they made substantial headway. When Franklin D. Richards went to England in 1847 to take over the presidency of the mission in that land, his predecessor, Parley P. Pratt, announced that during the two and a half years that he had been there, twenty-one thousand souls had been baptized into the Church.

Missionary work in France and Italy was not so fruitful, although some converts were made. In the Scandinavian countries the elders were mobbed and jailed, but a spirit of tolerance gradually strengthened and thousands of converts were made in those lands.

These preachers, traveling without purse or scrip, went to Malta, to India, to Chile and to the Islands of the Pacific. Almost everywhere they encountered hatred and the cries of the mob. But in all

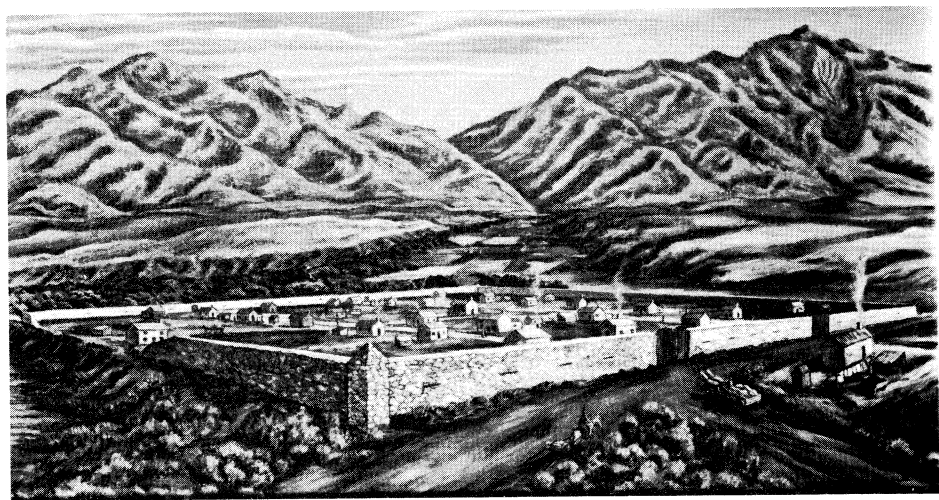
of these lands they found a few who were receptive to their message.

Once baptized, these converts desired almost invariably to "gather" with others of their faith in the valleys of the Rockies — Zion, they called it. And once there, differences of language and customs were soon lost sight of as men and women from many lands worked together in the building of a commonwealth.

### *ZION SPREADS HER BRANCHES*

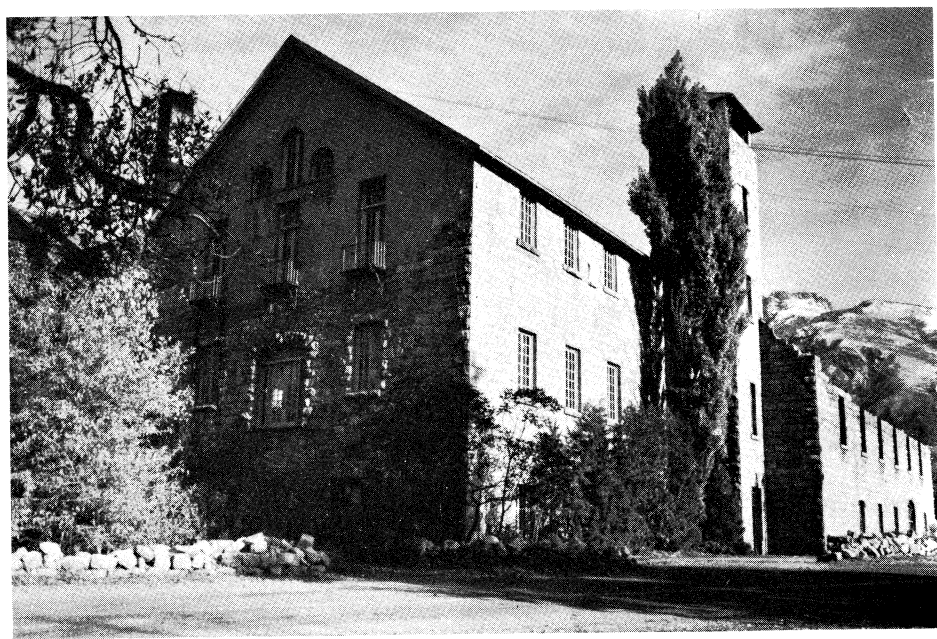
It was inevitable that the boundaries of the Church should extend beyond the valley of Salt Lake. With thousands of converts coming from the nations, other settlements were founded. At first these were rather close to the mother colony, but soon wagon trains were moving north and south toward the distant valleys. By the close of the third year settlements extended two hundred miles to the south. By the end of the fourth year colonies were found over a distance of three hundred miles. Then in 1851 five hundred of the Saints were called to go to southern California to plant a colony. They there laid the foundations of San Bernardino.

In nearly every case this pioneering entailed great sacrifice. Families were often called to leave their comfortable homes and cultivated fields and go into the wilderness to begin over again. But through their efforts hundreds of colonies were planted over a vast section of the West. Of the extent of this colonization James H. McClintock, Arizona State Historian, wrote:



Old Union Fort—An Early-day Settlement

Pioneer Paper Mill



It is a fact little appreciated that the Mormons have been first in agricultural colonization of nearly all the intermountain states of today. . . . Not drawn by visions of wealth, unless they looked forward to celestial mansions, they sought, particularly, valleys wherein peace and plenty could be secured by labor . . . .

First of the faith on the western slopes of the continent was the settlement at San Francisco by Mormons from the ship Brooklyn. They landed July 21, 1846, to found the first English speaking community of the Golden State, theretofore Mexican. These Mormons established the farming community of New Helvetia, in the San Joaquin Valley, the same fall, while men from the Mormon Battalion, January 24, 1848, participated in the discovery of gold at Sutter's Fort. Mormons also were pioneers in Southern California, where in 1851, several hundred families of the faith settled at San Bernardino.

The first Anglo-Saxon settlement within the boundaries of the present state of Colorado was at Pueblo, November 15, 1846, by Capt. James Brown and about 150 Mormon men and women who had been sent back from New Mexico, into which they had gone, a part of the Mormon Battalion that marched on to the Pacific Coast.

The first American settlement in Nevada was one of the Mormons in the Carson Valley, at Genoa, in 1851.

In Wyoming, as early as 1854, was a Mormon settlement at Green River, near Fort Bridger, known as Fort Supply.

In Idaho, too, preeminence is claimed by virtue of a Mormon settlement at Fort Lemhi, on the Salmon River, in 1855, and at Franklin, in Cache Valley, in 1860.

. . . In honorable place in point of seniority [in the settlement of Arizona] are to be noted the Mormon settlements on the Muddy and the Virgin.

Speaking of the quality of their pioneering, F. S. Dellenbaugh, great student of the settlement of the West, wrote:

It must be acknowledged that the Mormons were wilderness breakers of high quality. They not only broke it, but they

kept it broken; and instead of the gin mill and the gambling hell, as cornerstones of their progress and as examples to the natives of the white men's superiority, they planted orchards, gardens, farms, schoolhouses, and peaceful homes. . . . A people that have accomplished so much that is good, who have endured danger, privation, and suffering, who have withstood the obloquy of more powerful sects, have in them much that is commendable; they deserve more than abuse, they deserve admiration.

## *Years of Conflict*

UNDER the best of circumstances pioneering a wilderness is a wearisome, laborious task. In the Great Basin of the West it was an unending struggle against drought, Indians, difficult conditions of travel, poverty, scarcity of water power, excessive freight rates on merchandise brought overland, crickets, grasshoppers, and crop failures. Tragedies were frequent in the fight to secure a foothold in this vast, forbidding country.

One would think that under such conditions there would be little time for spiritual matters. But the Mormons were ever conscious of the reason they had come to this region. It was not for adventure; nor was it to get rich. They had seen more than enough adventure in Missouri and Illinois, and the lands they had left were far richer than those of the valleys of the mountains. They had come to worship God and to build up his work. And they never lost sight of that fact in all of their pursuits.

### *CONVERTS FROM THE NATIONS*

It was not uncommon for men suddenly to be called by the Church to go to distant lands as missionaries. Such labor invariably involved great sacrifice, both on the part of the missionary and the family at home. While the father preached the gospel, the mother and children did the heavy chores, though they were frequently assisted by members of the Priesthood who took time from their own work.

Converts in large numbers gathered to the colonies in the mountains. To assist the poor, the Perpetual Emigrating Fund Company was formed in 1849, whereby those needing help might borrow money to care for their transportation, the money to be paid back as quickly as possible so that others might be benefited. The fund began functioning in 1850; within the next thirty years it aided forty thousand people to get to Utah and did a business amounting to \$3,600,000.

Before the coming of the railroad, it was impossible to find wagons enough to carry all those who wished to cross the plains. Some of them were so anxious to gather with the Church that they walked, pulling handcarts more than a thousand miles. Most of those who traveled in this way reached the Salt Lake Valley safely and as quickly as those who moved with ox teams.

But bitter tragedy struck two of the handcart companies. The story of these is tersely told in two markers standing in the sage-covered country of Wyoming, near South Pass. One of them reads:

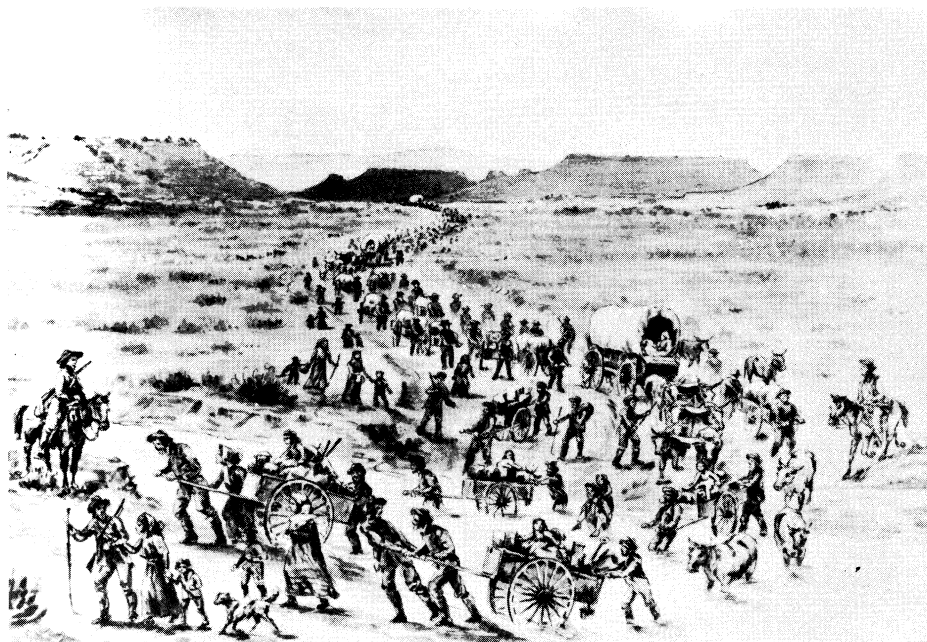
Captain James G. Willie's Handcart Company of Mormon emigrants on their way to Utah, greatly exhausted by the deep snows of an early winter and suffering from lack of food and clothing, had assembled here for reorganization for relief parties from Utah, about the end of October, 1856. Thirteen persons were frozen to death during a single night and were buried here in one grave. Two others died the next day and were buried nearby. Of the company of 404 persons 77 perished before help arrived. The survivors reached Salt Lake City November 9, 1856.

While standing in that lonely, tragic spot it is easy to imagine the sorry situation in which these emi-



Handcart Pioneer Family

## The Handcart Migration





grants of 1856 found themselves—a group of hungry men, women, and children huddled together in the midst of a bleak and desolate wilderness, weary from walking nearly a thousand miles, many of them sick from exhaustion and insufficient food, the handcarts they had pulled standing beside the makeshift tents they had contrived to erect against the swirling snow.

These two companies had been delayed in their departure from Iowa City because their carts were not ready as expected. The authorities in Salt Lake City were not notified of their coming and consequently had made no preparations to see them through. When early storms caught them in the western country of Wyoming they found themselves in desperate circumstances.

Fortunately, they had been passed on the way by two or three returning missionaries who were traveling in a light wagon. Sensing the situation, these men pushed on to Salt Lake City with all possible speed. They found the Church in General Conference, but when Brigham Young heard their story, he dismissed the meeting and immediately organized teams and wagons to go to the aid of the stricken emigrants. After pushing through harrowing experiences themselves, the rescue party reached the Willie Company at Rock Creek Hollow. Leaving aid there, they pressed on to the Martin Company some distance farther east. The tragic experiences of these two companies were the most sorrowful in the entire movement of the Mormons.

*THE LAMANITES*

If the story of the handcart pioneers is a sorrowful chapter in the history of the Mormons, how much more tragic is the story of the Indians in the history of America. The philosophy that the only good Indian was a dead one was all too often the creed of men of the frontier. In marked contrast with this was Brigham Young's policy "that it was cheaper to feed them than to fight them." His generous treatment of the red men led Senator Chase of Ohio to remark that "no governor had ever done so well by the Indians since the days of William Penn."

This respect for the natives arose out of the Book of Mormon. That volume declared that the Indians were descendants of Israel. Their progenitors are known in that volume as the Lamanites, and, in a prophetic vein, the book speaks of a hopeful future for these people. Not always have they been benighted, and at some time in the future they will again become an able and enlightened people.

But though the Mormons were patient and generous, there was occasional trouble. Herds of horses and cattle were a temptation the red men often could not resist. The natives raided settlements, and there were two serious outbreaks which involved large losses of property. However, in view of the vast territory which they settled, the Indian troubles of the Mormons were few indeed. The history of their relations with the natives has proved the wisdom of Brigham Young's policy.

*THE UTAH WAR*

But though the Mormons had little trouble with Indians, they were to suffer from another oppressive measure. On July 24, 1857 the inhabitants of Salt Lake City were celebrating both Independence Day and the tenth anniversary of their arrival in the valley. Many of them had gone up one of the mountain canyons adjacent to the city for this purpose.

In the midst of the festivities a dust-laden and weary horseman hurriedly rode to Brigham Young's tent. He brought ominous news. The United States was sending an army to crush the Mormons! At least that was the story picked up from the soldiers, passed on the way west, who boasted of what they would do once they reached Salt Lake City.

This had come about because two disappointed would-be federal office holders had sent to Washington stories that the Mormons were in rebellion against the United States. As was later proved, their stories were absurd. Yet, on only the thin fabric of their tales, the President had ordered twenty-five hundred soldiers to put down a "Mormon rebellion."

Though Brigham Young had properly been installed as governor of the territory, he had been given no notice of the coming of the troops. Not knowing what to expect, the Mormon leaders made preparations. They determined that no other group, armed or otherwise, should again inhabit the homes which they had built. They concluded that if it became necessary they would make Utah the desert it had been before their arrival.

Men were dispatched to do what they could to delay the army and play for time in the hope that something might be done to turn the President from this madness. The prairie was burned and the cattle of the army were stampeded. The bridges which the Mormons had built were destroyed and the fords dredged. But no lives were taken. Because of this carefully executed plan, the army was forced to go into winter quarters in what is now western Wyoming.

But the Mormons were not entirely without friends. Colonel Thomas L. Kane, brother of Elisha Kent Kane, the famed Arctic explorer, had become acquainted with the Saints when they were moving across Iowa. He had witnessed the injustices they had suffered. He petitioned the President and received permission to go to Utah to learn the true state of affairs. Largely through his efforts, the President was persuaded to send to Utah a "peace commission" in the spring of 1858.

Brigham Young agreed that the army should be permitted to pass through the city, but should not encamp within it. And lest there should be any violation of this agreement he put into effect the plan originally decided upon.

When the soldiers entered the valley they found the city desolate and deserted except for a few watchful men armed with flint and steel, and sharp axes. The homes and barns were filled with straw ready to be fired in case of violation, and the axes were ready to destroy the orchards.

The people had moved to the south leaving their homes to be burned, as they had done on more than

one occasion previously. Some of the army officers and men were deeply affected as they marched through the silent streets, realizing what their coming had meant. Colonel Philip St. George Cooke, who had led the Mormon Battalion on its long march and knew of the wrongs previously inflicted on these people, bared his head in reverent respect.

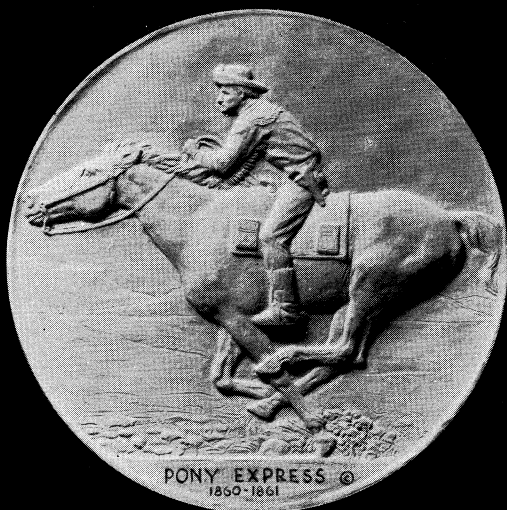
Fortunately there was no difficulty. The army encamped forty miles southwest of the city. The people returned to their homes. And the event has gone down in history as "Buchanan's Blunder."

### A MAN AT WORK

Joseph Smith had been succeeded by a man as peculiarly fitted in his day to lead the Church as the Prophet had been in his own. Brigham Young, called

### The Pony Express

These brave horsemen of the plains and mountains wrote a significant chapter in America's pioneer history.



by one of his biographers "the Modern Moses," had led Israel to another Canaan with its Dead Sea. An interesting description of this man is given by Horace Greeley, editor of the *New York Tribune*, who interviewed the Mormon leader in 1860:

Brigham Young spoke readily, with no appearance of hesitation or reserve, and with no apparent desire to conceal anything; nor did he repel any of my questions as impertinent. He was very plainly dressed in thin summer clothing, and with no air of sanctimony or fanaticism. In appearance he is a portly, frank, good-natured rather thick-set man of fifty-eight seeming to enjoy life, and to be in no particular hurry to get to heaven. His associates are plain men, evidently born and reared to a life of labor, and looking as little like crafty hypocrites or swindlers as any body of men I ever met.

In 1861 the famed Pony Express was begun. Mail, which had first been carried from the East in

## The Rails Joined

Completion of the transcontinental railroad at Promontory, Utah, May 10, 1869.



slow, ox-drawn wagons, and later on the Overland Stage, now reached Salt Lake City in six days from St. Joseph, Missouri. The arrival of each pony was an event, and the news that reached the West by this means was of tremendous significance. The Southern States had seceded. America was torn by Civil War.

To the Mormons this tragic news was confirmation of the prophecy issued by Joseph Smith on December 25, 1832. Though Utah was not a state, in loyalty she was tied to the Union. That loyalty was expressed by Brigham Young in the first message sent over the Overland Telegraph in October, 1861: "Utah has not seceded, but is firm for the Constitution and laws of our once happy country."

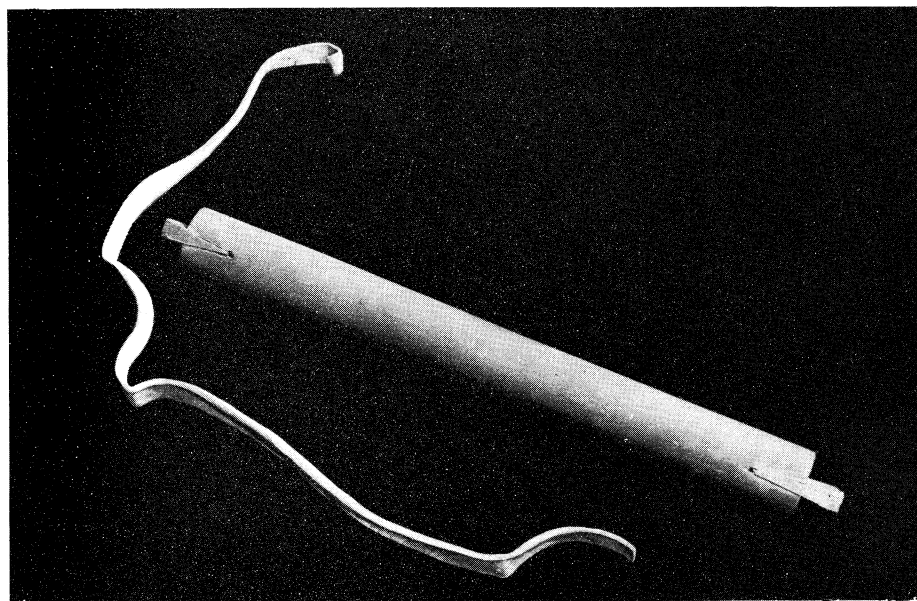
On May 10, 1869 the Union Pacific Railroad, building west from the Missouri River, and the Central Pacific, building east from California, met at Promontory, Utah. For the Mormons it meant the end of isolation, and ox-team journeys across the plains. And it also meant a better understanding of them and their work with the coming of thousands of visitors to witness the miracle they had wrought in the desert. The picture which the cross-country traveler saw in these valleys was truly interesting. Here were scores of neat little cities, surrounded by irrigated fields and beyond these, range lands well stocked with cattle. And on Temple Square in Salt Lake City was a great Tabernacle, and also the partially completed Temple.

Ground had been broken for the Temple in 1853. A stone quarry was opened in Little Cottonwood Canyon twenty miles south of the city. Hauling the granite, however, posed a serious problem. During



Detail of Tabernacle Roof Construction

Wooden Peg and Rawhide Thong





the early years of construction four yoke of oxen required four days to make a round trip in hauling each of the huge foundation stones.

When the army came to Utah, the excavation was filled and the foundation covered to give the site the appearance of a newly plowed field, and construction was not resumed until the policy of the government had been determined. The work was executed with great care, for as Brigham Young said, "the building was to stand through the Millennium."

While the Temple in Salt Lake City was in course of construction, similar structures were undertaken at St. George, 325 miles south; at Manti, 150 miles south; and at Logan, 80 miles north.

In 1863, while work was going forward on the Salt Lake Temple, construction of the Tabernacle on Temple Square was also undertaken. This has become one of the famous buildings of America.

In dimensions the Tabernacle is 250 feet long by 150 feet wide and 80 feet high. The problem of building a roof over this area was serious because neither steel rods, nails, nor bolts were available. First, the forty-four buttresses of sandstone were laid up. These were to become in effect the walls of the building, with doors in between. Each of these pillars is twenty feet high, three feet wide and nine feet through. On these was constructed the huge roof.

It was formed by building a vast bridgework of timbers in lattice fashion. These were pinned together with wooden pegs and bound with rawhide to prevent splitting. This trusswork occupies a space of ten feet from the inside plastered ceiling to the outside roofing. No interior pillar supports the roof.

As a fitting complement to this vast auditorium, Brigham Young requested a magnificent organ. The assignment was given Joseph Ridges, an organ builder who had joined the Church in Australia.

Difficulty was experienced in securing suitable timber, of long straight grain. This was hauled by ox team three hundred miles from Pine Valley near St. George, and was laboriously shaped by skilled artisans.

With the completion of the building and the organ in 1870, a choir was organized. This was the beginning of the famed Tabernacle Choir which has become known throughout the nation in recent years by reason of numerous radio broadcasts from Temple Square.

### *THE DEATH OF BRIGHAM YOUNG*

In 1875 the President of the United States, Ulysses S. Grant, visited Utah. On his arrival in Salt Lake City he was driven through the streets thronged with people. He had accepted as true the falsehoods concerning the Mormons which were still circulated in the East, and while passing long lines of rosy-cheeked children who were waving and cheering, he turned to the governor who was his host and asked, "Whose children are these, Governor?" "Those are Mormon children," the governor replied. To this the President remarked, "Governor, I have been deceived."

Brigham Young by this time was a man seventy-four years of age. He was in good health, but the trial of the years was telling on him. Life had been



## Mormon Tabernacle Organ and Choir

Scene of "Music and the Spoken Word" heard from the "Cross-roads of the West" each Sunday for many years. This historic musical organization is comprised of more than three hundred singers who serve without pay.



## The Historic Tabernacle on Temple Square

Few buildings in America attract so many interested visitors. Approximately a million tourists, from every state in the Union and many foreign lands, visit this building each year. In the foreground is the Seagull Monument.

a constant struggle from the time he had joined the Church in 1833. In summing up the results of that struggle he wrote an article for the editor of a New York paper in response to a request for a summary of his labors:

I thank you for the privilege of presenting facts as they are. I will furnish them gladly at any time you make the request. The result of my labors for the past 26 years briefly summed up are: The peopling of this territory by the Latter-day Saints of about 100,000 souls; the founding of over 200 cities, towns and villages inhabited by our people, the establishment of schools, factories, mills and other institutions calculated to improve and benefit our communities.

My whole life is devoted to the Almighty's service, and while I regret that my mission is not better understood by the world, the time will come when I will be understood, and I leave to futurity the judgment of my labors and their result as they shall become manifest.

The end of his labors came on August 29, 1877. A few days earlier he had fallen seriously ill of what medical men have since thought was appendicitis. His last words as he lay dying were a call to the man he had succeeded — "Joseph . . . Joseph . . . Joseph . . . ."

## *Years of Endurance*

THE subject of polygamy was considered in the first section of this book. But the history of the Church is so inextricably interwoven with this doctrine that it should be given further consideration in this section.

The doctrine was first pronounced by Joseph Smith in Nauvoo in 1842. Many of the men close to him knew of it and accepted it as a principle of divine pronouncement. However, it was not until 1852 that it was publicly taught. It should be said at the outset that the practice among the Mormons was radically different from that of oriental peoples. Each wife, with her children, occupied a separate house, or, if the wives lived in the same house, as was sometimes the case, in separate quarters. No distinction was made between either of the wives or the children. The husband provided for each family, was responsible for the education of the children, and gave both the children and their mothers the same advantages he would have given to his family under the monogamous relationship. If it was thought he could not do this, he was not permitted to enter upon the practice of plural marriage.

Indications point to the fact that as a rule the children of polygamous marriages were superior physically and mentally.

While the practice was extremely limited—only about three percent of the families were involved—and while it was kept on an extremely high level, it

## Presidents of the Church

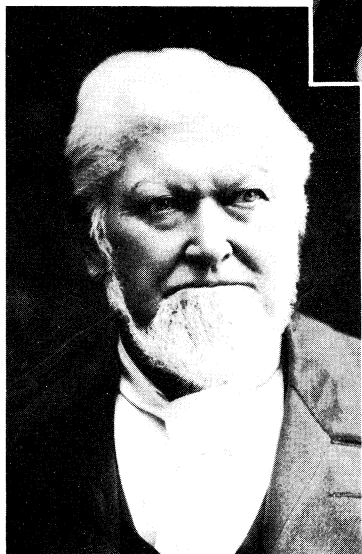
These men faced the storm of anti-Mormon persecution.



Brigham Young



John Taylor



Wilford Woodruff

was the kind of thing of which enemies of the Church could easily make capital.

The question was agitated over the country, and it entered into the presidential campaign of 1860. When Lincoln was asked what he proposed to do about the Mormons, he replied, "Let them alone." In 1862 the Congress passed an anti-polygamy law, but it was aimed at plural marriages and not polygamous relations. Ten years later the Congress passed a bill prohibiting polygamy. It was considered unconstitutional by many people in the nation, and generally by the Mormons. A test case was brought into the courts of Utah, and carried through the Supreme Court of the United States resulting in a decision adverse to the Mormons. In the midst of this difficulty, John Taylor succeeded to the presidency of the Church. The years that followed were truly years of endurance.

### *"CHAMPION OF LIBERTY"*

Elder Taylor was a native of England, where he had been a lay Methodist preacher. He emigrated to Canada in 1832, and heard Mormonism preached for the first time four years later. When he joined the Church, his bold spirit, educated mind, and ready tongue made of him an outstanding advocate of the cause. He served as a missionary in Canada, in his native England, and in France.

This man selected as his motto, "The kingdom of God or nothing." He once remarked: "I do not believe in a religion that cannot have all my affections, but in a religion for which I can both live and die. I would rather have God for my friend than all other



influences and powers." In this spirit he defended Mormonism with such vigor that his friends in the Church called him "the Champion of Liberty." He it was who was wounded when Joseph and Hyrum Smith were killed in Carthage jail.

As senior member of the Council of Twelve Apostles, he succeeded Brigham Young as President of the Church. And it was during his regime that the Mormons were again made to feel the bitter hand of persecution. He foresaw the storm when in 1880, while the Saints were celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the Church, he warned them: "There are events in the future, and not far ahead, that will require all our faith, all our confidence, all our trust in God, to enable us to withstand the influences that will be brought against us. . . . There never was a time when we needed to be more humble and more prayerful; there never was a time when we needed more fidelity, self-denial, and adherence to the principles of truth than we do this day."

The storm broke two years later. The Edmunds Act was passed by Congress and became law. Polygamy was made punishable by fine or imprisonment—usually imprisonment. No man who had more than one wife could act as a juror in any Utah court. In Idaho those who were members of the Church were disfranchised. No one who believed in polygamy could become a citizen.

In 1887 the Edmunds-Tucker Act gave added power to the judges who tried polygamy cases. This act also disincorporated the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, ordered the Supreme Court to

wind up its affairs, and required that its property be escheated to the nation.

The law was administered with extreme harshness. Thousands of Mormons were disfranchised. A thousand men were imprisoned because they had plural families. Homes were broken. The election machinery was taken from the hands of the people.

Under these conditions John Taylor died on July 25, 1887. He was succeeded by Wilford Woodruff.

### *A MANIFESTO TO THE PEOPLE*

To undertake the responsibility of Church leadership under such circumstances was no small task. Colonies of Latter-day Saints were now scattered from Canada to Mexico. Active missionary work was carried on throughout the United States, in the British Isles, in most of the nations of Europe, and in the islands of the Pacific. In spite of determined opposition many converts to the faith were made in all of these missions. And yet the Church in Utah was dispossessed of its property, and most of its leaders were in prison or were facing prosecution. Under these conditions Wilford Woodruff undertook the responsibility of leadership. He was eighty years of age at the time.

Fortunately he had been well trained. He had joined the Church only three years after its organization. He had marched from Ohio to Missouri to aid his brethren when they were driven from Jackson County, and had passed through the Missouri persecutions. As we have previously seen, he was a powerful

missionary in England; in fact, he was the means of bringing more people into the Church through personal missionary labors than any other individual in the history of the movement.

He had gone west as one of the pioneer company, and Brigham Young was in his wagon when he made the prophetic statement concerning the Salt Lake Valley: "This is the place." When President Young had indicated the site for a temple only four days after arriving in the valley, Wilford Woodruff had marked the spot with a stake. And he had participated in most of the significant events connected with the building of the territory since that time.

But now all progress had ceased under the heavy hand of law enforcement. In a revelation given to the Church in 1841, the Prophet had declared as the word of the Lord: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, that when I give a commandment to any of the sons of men to do a work unto my name, and those sons of men go with all their might and with all they have to perform that work, and cease not their diligence, and their enemies come upon them and hinder them from performing that work, behold it behooveth me to require that work no more at the hands of those sons of men, but to accept their offerings." Another fundamental teaching of the Church also applied. One of the Articles of Faith of the organization reads: "We believe in being subject to kings, presidents, rulers, and magistrates, in obeying, honoring, and sustaining the law."

What was to be done under the circumstances?

After "earnest prayer before the Lord," President Woodruff issued on October 6, 1890 what is

known in Church history as "the Manifesto." It declared an end to the practice of plural marriage. Since that time the Church has not practiced nor sanctioned such marriage.

On April 6, 1893 the great temple in Salt Lake City was declared completed, and the building was dedicated to God as His holy house. Prior to its dedication non-members of the Church were invited to go through the building and its various facilities were explained to them. Since its dedication, only members of the Church in good standing have been permitted to enter.

It was fitting that Wilford Woodruff should have lived to offer the dedicatory prayer. Forty-six years earlier he had driven the stake to mark the location of the building. For forty years he had watched its construction. Its completion and dedication was one of the great events in the history of the area.

Before his death in September, 1898, President Woodruff was to participate in another significant event. Although the residents of the territory had applied for statehood in 1849, this boon had been denied because of anti-Mormon agitation throughout the nation. On January 4, 1896 Utah was admitted to the Union as a state. In ceremonies incident to the occasion, President Woodruff was asked to offer the prayer. The prayer is significant of the man:

Almighty God, the creator of heaven and earth, Thou who are the God of the nations and the Father of the spirits of all men, we humbly bow before Thee on this great occasion. . . .

When we gaze upon these fertile valleys with their abundant products of fields and garden, their pleasant homes and pros-

perous inhabitants . . . and contrast these with the barren and silent wastes which greeted the eyes of the Pioneers when first they looked upon these dry sage lands less than half a century ago, our souls are filled with wonder and with praise. . . .

And now when the efforts of several decades to secure the priceless boon of perfect political liberty . . . have at length been crowned with glorious success, we feel that to Thee, our Father and our God, we are indebted for this inestimable blessing.

We pray Thee to bless the President of the United States and his cabinet, that they may be inspired to conduct the affairs of this nation in wisdom, justice and equity that its rights may be maintained at home and abroad and that all its citizens may enjoy the privileges of free men . . . and may the privileges of free government be extended to every land and clime and oppression be broken down to rise no more, until all nations shall be united for the common good, that war may cease, that the voice of strife may be hushed, that universal brotherhood may prevail, and Thou, our God, shall be honored everywhere as the Everlasting Father and the King of peace.

## *The Sunshine of Good Will*

AT THE age of 84, when most men have laid aside their life's work, Lorenzo Snow succeeded Wilford Woodruff as President of the Church. As with the men who had gone before him, early in life he gained extensive experience in the Church, serving on missions both at home and abroad.

When he took over the leadership of the organization, the Church was in a desperate financial condition. The nation had passed through a severe economic depression, which had been felt in the West as elsewhere. Then too, under the anti-polygamy prosecution the payment of tithing had seriously decreased. The property of the Church had been escheated, and much of the incentive for paying tithing had gone. The organization was under a staggering burden of indebtedness.

In the spring of 1899, in the midst of this situation, President Snow made a trip to the town of St. George in southern Utah. Drought had blighted the land. The preceding winter had been the driest in thirty-five years, and the one preceding that the driest in thirty-four years. The people were discouraged, for it appeared as if a curse had come over what once had been a garden-land.

By inspiration, as President Snow said, he spoke to the assembled Saints on the law of tithing. Had not the Lord said through the Prophet Malachi that Israel had robbed Him in tithes and offerings? And had He not also given them a promise that if they

would bring their tithes into the storehouse, He would open the windows of heaven and pour out a blessing that they would not have room enough to receive it?

The President then went on to promise the Saints that if they would faithfully pay their tithes they could plant their crops and rain would come. The people heeded the counsel. They paid their tithes, not only in St. George but all over the Church as the President continued his appeals for obedience to the commandment of God. But weeks passed in the southern colony, while the hot winds blew and the crops wilted.

Then one morning in August a telegram was laid on the President's desk: "Rain in St. George." The creeks and rivers filled and the crops matured.

In 1907 the last of the Church's indebtedness was paid. And because of the faithful payment of tithing the Church has since then been free of financial stress.

### *JOSEPH F. SMITH*

Lorenzo Snow died October 10, 1901. He was succeeded by Joseph F. Smith, son of Hyrum Smith who was murdered in Carthage jail. His life is worthy of note because it epitomizes the history of Mormonism from a position of ignominy to one of wide respect.

He was born November 13, 1838 at Far West, Missouri. At the time his father was a prisoner of the mob-militia whose avowed purpose was to ex-



## St. George Temple

One of four temples constructed at great sacrifice during Utah's pioneer era. It stands as a gleaming monument to the faith and integrity of the men and women who settled the southern part of the state.



terminate the Mormons. When he was an infant his mother carried him in the flight from Far West to Illinois.

One of his earliest recollections was of that historic night of June 27, 1844, when he was five years of age. A knock was heard on his mother's window and a trembling voice whispered that his father had been killed by the Carthage mob. As a seven-year-old boy he heard the roar of guns incident to the final expulsion of the Mormons from Nauvoo, and before reaching his eighth birthday he drove a team of oxen most of the way across Iowa.

In 1848, the family crossed the plains. It was no small task for a ten-year-old boy to yoke and unyoke oxen as well as drive most of the day. When the boy was thirteen, his mother died, her vitality completely exhausted by the experiences through which she had passed.

Two years later he was called on a mission to the Hawaiian Islands. Making his way to the Coast, he worked in a shingle mill to earn money to pay his way to the Islands.

Following his missionary experience in the Islands, he served the cause in the British Isles as well as in other fields of labor. He became President of the Church in 1901. Shortly after this, Reed Smoot was elected U. S. Senator from Utah. But his seat was contested by political enemies who played on the old polygamy issue. Joseph F. Smith, rather than the senator, became the chief target of attack. He was cartooned and slandered over the nation. But he had seen so much intolerance during his life, that he

passed over this new outburst, saying of those who opposed him, "Let them alone. Let them go. Give them the liberty of speech they want. Let them tell their own story and write their own doom."

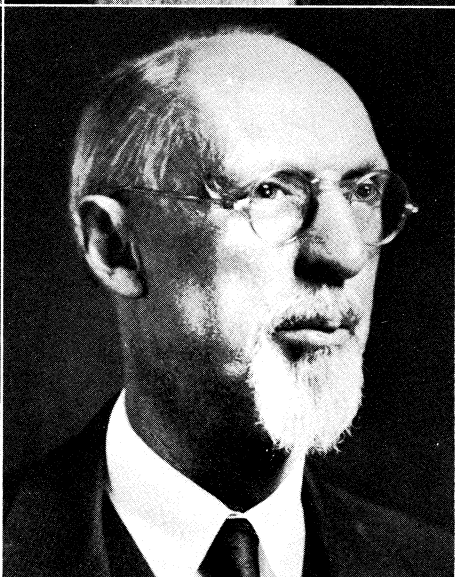
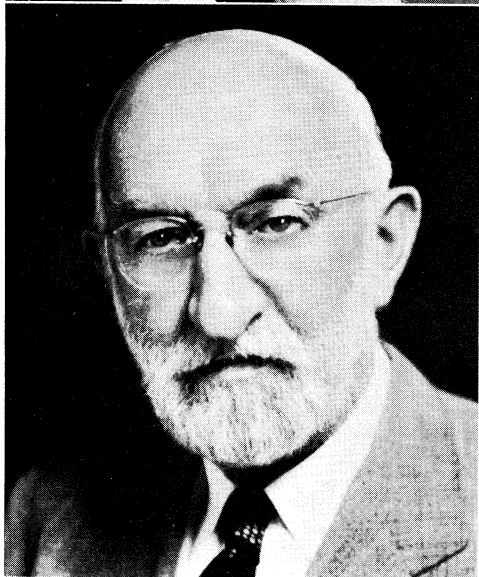
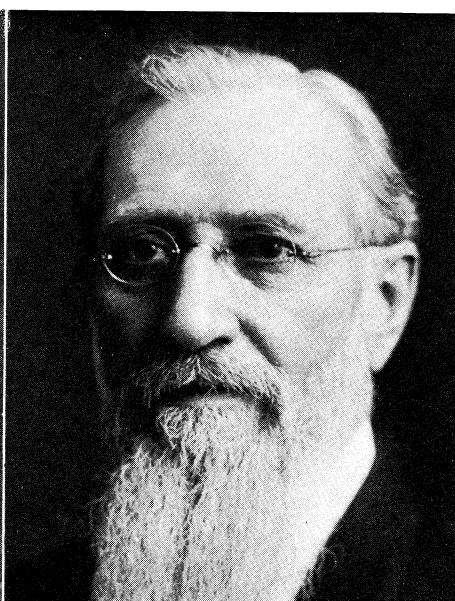
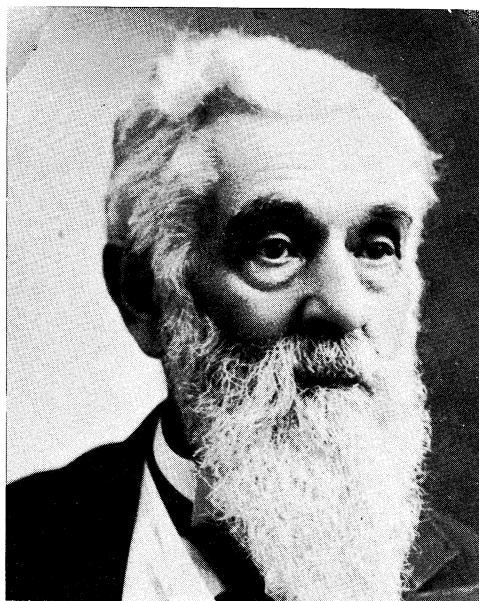
In spite of all such attacks, these were years of progress for the Church. Missionary work was extended. Scores of beautiful buildings were erected, including three temples — one in Arizona, one in Canada, and one in the Hawaiian Islands. A Bureau of Information was established on Temple Square in Salt Lake City. Thousands of tourists came from all parts of the world, usually out of curiosity. But they learned the facts concerning the Mormons. The old hatreds, the old bitterness slowly gave way.

On November 18, 1918, Joseph F. Smith died. Newspapers which had slandered his character paid editorial homage to him, and prominent men throughout the nation paid high tribute to his memory. The years had vindicated him and the cause to which he had dedicated his life.

### *HEBER J. GRANT*

Four days following the death of President Smith, Heber J. Grant became President of the Church. His father had been a counselor to Brigham Young, but had died when the boy was nine days old. He was born November 22, 1856, the first of the presidents of the Church to have been born in Salt Lake City.

Heber J. Grant was by nature a practical man. His bent lay in the field of finance, and as a young man he made an enviable record. But at the same



Four Presidents of the Church

Lorenzo Snow

Heber J. Grant

Joseph F. Smith

George Albert Smith

time he was active in Church affairs, and when only twenty-six years of age, he was ordained a member of the Council of Twelve Apostles. From that time forward he was a zealous worker in the cause of Mormonism.

His financial abilities were shown to marked degree when during the depression of the nineties he was sent east by the President of the Church to borrow money. In spite of business conditions and the popular attitude toward the Mormons, he returned with hundreds of thousands of dollars which proved a great boon in those difficult times. It was this indebtedness, in part, which was discharged during the administrations of Lorenzo Snow and Joseph F. Smith through the faithfulness of the membership in the payment of tithes.

Heber J. Grant was also a leading factor in the establishment of the western beet sugar industry. The Church was interested in this because it meant a cash crop for thousands of its members. Accordingly, it materially assisted in the founding of this industry which has put millions of dollars into the hands of western farmers.

One of President Grant's favorite projects was giving away books. The funds for this purpose he called his "cigarette money." During his lifetime he passed out more than a hundred thousand volumes at his own expense.

Unflinching in his loyalty to his church and its teachings, he was nevertheless a great friend maker. Leaders in business, education, and government were his intimate friends, and his capacity for getting along with people greatly helped in breaking down the wall of prejudice which had existed against the Mormons.

His administration was an era of progress. The Church passed its hundredth anniversary in 1930, commemorating the event with a great celebration. Unhampered by the oppression of religious bigots, freed from the brutality of mobs, strong enough to assert its power for good, it flourished in an era of good will previously unknown in all of its history.

### *THE CHURCH IN OUR TIME*

President Grant died May 15, 1945 in his eighty-ninth year. He was succeeded by George Albert Smith, the present incumbent. President Smith is also a native of Salt Lake City, having been born here April 4, 1870. As a young man he served on a mission in the Southern States, and after becoming a member of the Council of Twelve Apostles, he presided over the affairs of the Church in Europe.

One of his major interests has been Scouting. He has served as a member of the National Executive Board of Boy Scouts of America, and has received the highest awards for local and national service to the cause of Scouting. In the official citation given him by national officials, it was stated that "to his enthusiasm for its [Scouting's] program must be largely traced the fact that Utah stands above all other states in the percentage of boys who are Scouts."

For many years President Smith has taken a leading part in preserving the story of America's pioneers. He was the organizer and has served as president of the Utah Pioneer Trails and Landmarks Association, under whose sponsorship the Mormon Trail from Nauvoo to Salt Lake City has been marked

with stone and bronze. He has likewise served as vice-president of the Oregon Trail Memorial Association, and was one of the organizers of the American Pioneer Trails Association.

The Mormon people are always mindful of their history. They know that the Church has reached its present stature only because of the trials and the courageous efforts of the men and women who made its history. It has endeavored to preserve their memory with suitable monuments as a reminder to this generation of the price paid for the peace they enjoy.

Among these monuments is one at Joseph Smith's birthplace at Sharon, Windsor County, Vermont. It is a striking shaft of marble, a monolith thirty-eight and one-half feet high, one foot for each year of the Prophet's life. Crowning the Hill Cumorah in western New York is another imposing monument. Surmounting a granite shaft is a statue in heroic size representing Moroni, the resurrected being who delivered the plates of the Book of Mormon to Joseph Smith.

Scenes of historical interest in other places have likewise been suitably marked. One of the most beautiful of these monuments stands in the old pioneer cemetery at Winter Quarters, Nebraska. It was placed in remembrance of the thousands who died in the forced migration across the plains.

On the State Capitol grounds in Salt Lake City the citizens of Utah have erected an inspiring monument to the memory of the Mormon Battalion. And at the site where Brigham Young first looked over the Salt Lake Valley, the people of the state have erected another memorial to the pioneers of the West.

The men and women of that pioneer era are gone. Gone are the days of forced winter marches, of burning homes and desecrated temples, of lonely graves on the prairie. Another generation has come to whom these trials are but words of history. But this generation also has its problems. Never was there a greater need for religion. Never have men and nations been more abjectly destitute of the principles of Christianity applied to living.

And now, as never before, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is endeavoring to meet this challenge and this opportunity. It has ever had but one purpose, and it is now trying to pursue that purpose more vigorously than at any time in its history. That objective is to bring men and women to a knowledge of the eternal truth that Jesus Christ is the Savior and Redeemer of the world, and to a realization that only through the cultivation of faith which actively manifests itself in good works can men and nations enjoy peace.

# *Articles of Faith*

## **Of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints**

1. We believe in God, the Eternal Father, and in His Son, Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost.
2. We believe that men will be punished for their own sins, and not for Adam's transgression.
3. We believe that through the atonement of Christ, all mankind may be saved, by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel.
4. We believe that the first principles and ordinances of the Gospel are: first, Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; second, Repentance; third, Baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; fourth, Laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost.
5. We believe that a man must be called of God, by prophecy, and by the laying on of hands, by those who are in authority, to preach the Gospel and administer in the ordinances thereof.
6. We believe in the same organization that existed in the Primitive Church, viz.: apostles, prophets, pastors, teachers, evangelists, etc.
7. We believe in the gift of tongues, prophecy, revelation, visions, healing, interpretation of tongues, etc.
8. We believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly; we also believe the Book of Mormon to be the word of God.
9. We believe all that God has revealed, all that He does now reveal, and we believe that He will yet reveal many great and important things pertaining to the kingdom of God.
10. We believe in the literal gathering of Israel and in the restoration of the Ten Tribes; that Zion will be built upon this (the American) continent; that Christ will reign personally upon the earth; and, that the earth will be renewed and receive its paradisiacal glory.
11. We claim the privilege of worshipping Almighty God according to the dictates of our own conscience, and allow all men the same privilege, let them worship how, where, or what they may.
12. We believe in being subject to kings, presidents, rulers, and magistrates, in obeying, honoring and sustaining the law.
13. We believe in being honest, true, chaste, benevolent, virtuous, and in doing good to all men; indeed, we may say that we follow the admonition of Paul—We believe all things, we hope all things, we have endured many things, and hope to be able to endure all things. If there is anything virtuous, lovely, or of good report or praiseworthy, we seek after these things.

—JOSEPH SMITH



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